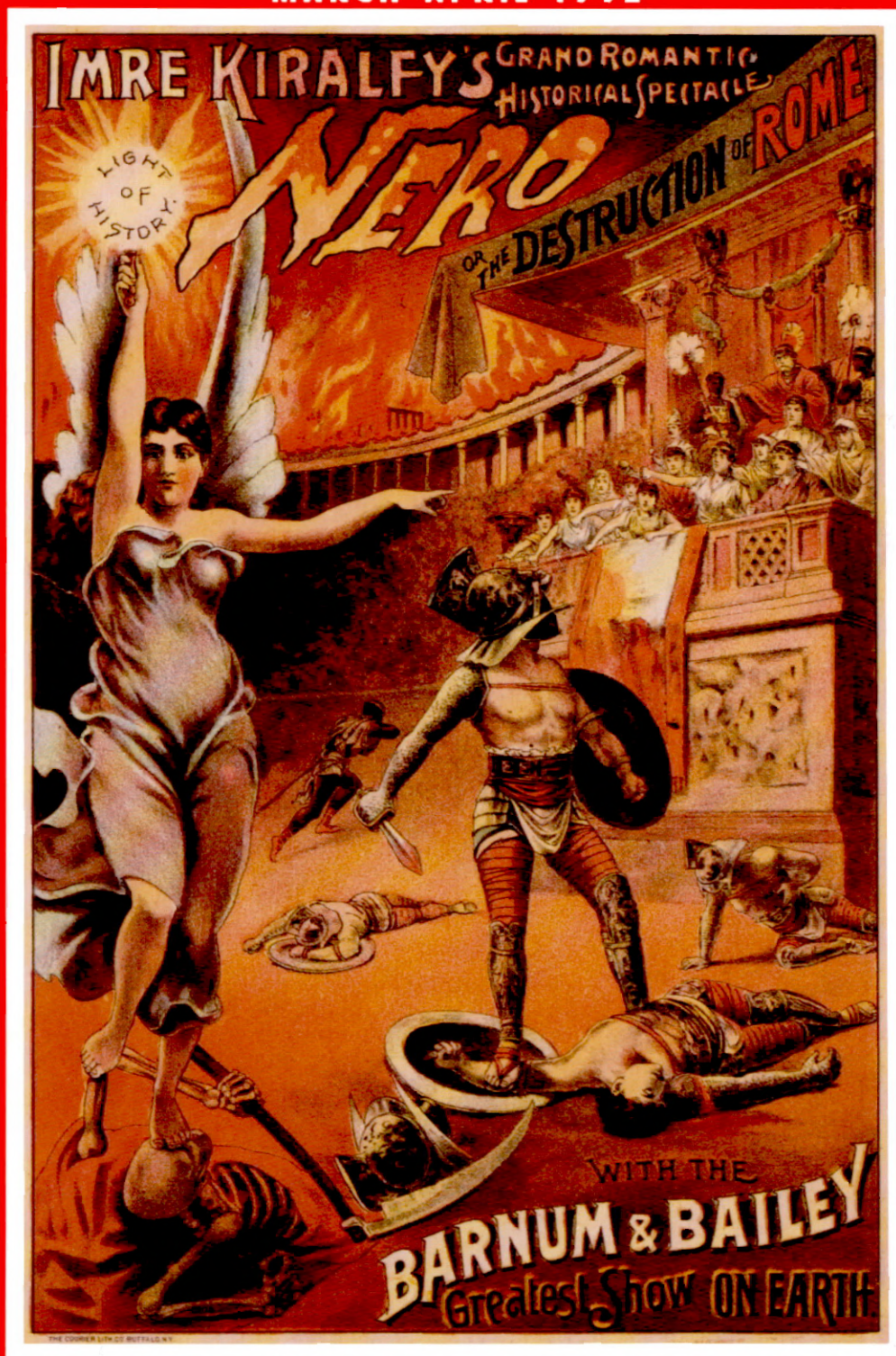


Bandwagon

THE JOURNAL OF
THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH-APRIL 1992



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THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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THIS MONTH'S COVER

When the Barnum and Bailey Circus played a winter season at London's 12,000 seat Olympia from November 11, 1889 to February 15, 1890, the main attraction was the great man himself, P. T. Barnum. He appeared in an open carriage at each performance, and perhaps more importantly, beguiled the English press during his stay, thereby garnering invaluable press for the show.

As a special finale, the spectacle Nero; or The Destruction of Rome was presented. The pantomime was produced and directed by Imre Kiralfy, a well known theatrical impresario on both sides of the Atlantic.

The gigantic production used over a thousand people, an incomprehensible number today, as well as much of the menagerie. The cast included almost two hundred ballet dancers. It was a sensation.

When Nero came to America for the 1890 and 1891 tours, extra baggage wagons had to be added to the Barnum show to carry the props and wardrobe. The sets were so elaborate that for efficiency's sake the spec closed the matinee performance and opened the evening's, thereby eliminating a tear-down and set up.

It ushered in a new era in American circus as other shows emulated Barnum and Bailey by incorporating huge pageants into their performances. The tradition con-

tinued into the 1920s, but none was as elegant or as massive as Nero.

The booklet on this month's cover is from the 1890 American season. It uses the same cover art, albeit with different coloring, as the one sold on the show in England the previous winter. Pfening Archives.

NEW MEMBERS

James Roberts 3749
110 Circular St.
Tiffin, OH 44883

Marvin Schlesinger 3750
100 Randall Ave. #4-L
Freeport, NY 11520

Willard R. Metscher 3751
1647 N. 28th St.
Sheboygan, WI 53081

A. Martin 3752
P. O. Box 702
Alpine, NJ 07620

Richard Gelman 3753
c/o National Bank of New York City
38th Ave. and 138th St.
Flushing, NY 11354

Robert A. Harms 3754
2331-D2 E. Avenue S. #108
Palmdale, CA 93550

Mark Thomas Kineavy 3755
174 Queens Dr. S.
Little Silver, NJ 07739-1631

1992 CHS CONVENTION

CHS President John Polacsek, chairman of the 1992 Circus Historical Society convention, has announced the schedule of events.

On Wednesday August 19 members can check in at the Doherty Motor Hotel in Clare, Michigan. Circus movies will be shown in the evening.

On Thursday there will be a free breakfast for those staying at the Doherty. The morning session will be the presentation of papers. There will be additional papers in the afternoon. The highlight of the evening will be an Amish yard dinner.

On Friday August 21 the morning session will feature a presentation by animal trainer Patricia White. There will also be an afternoon session. The banquet will be held in the evening. This will be a combined dinner with the Joel Warner Top of the CFA.

Saturday August 22 will be spent with the Carson and Barnes Circus. Early risers can view the set up of the show. During the morning a parade with wagons from the Circus Hall of Fame will be held. Lunch will be served in the circus cookhouse. The group will then attend the matinee performance of the circus.

At 6 p.m. there will be a preview of the CHS auction of circus memorabilia. The auction will begin at 7 p.m.

Contributions for the auction can be given to John Polacsek any time prior to the auction, or can be sent ahead of the convention. Dealers are invited to display at a charge of \$20.00.

The registration fee is \$65.00 for members and \$60.00 for spouse or guest. You may contact John Polacsek with any questions.

DUES NOTICES IN MAIL

CHS dues and subscription notices will be mailed in April. Please do not mail your payment until you receive your notice.

If your payment is not received by July 1, 1992, the July-August *Bandwagon* will not be mailed.

The current dues subscription charge is \$19.00 in the United States and \$24.00 outside the U.S.

You may show your extra support for the Circus Historical Society by becoming a Sustaining, Contributing and Concessionaires member by paying \$25, \$50 or \$100, rather than the standard rate. Last year over 225 sent the extra amount.

This generosity allowed the *Bandwagon* to publish more pages than ever before and include more color. All contributions will be used for the magazine.

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The reader is advised to consult two of the author's recent Bandwagon articles for background material leading up to the organization of the Gorman Bros. Circus during the winter of 1933-34. The first of these "The Walter L. Main Circus 1931-32," in the May-June and July-August 1991 issues. This article covers Tom Gorman's association with this show.

The second article, "Famous Robbins Circus, Season of 1936 and other James Heron Shows of the 1930s" was published in the March-April 1989 issue. It covers the World Bros. Circus of 1933 where Gorman was general manager and James Heron, road manager. Both men held a financial interest in the show which was framed with the residue of the failed 1932 Main show. The duo parted company in the early fall, dividing the property and animals. Heron continued for the remainder of the season with his own version of World Bros. Gorman moved his property to a quarters in Jersey City, New Jersey. He announced that Fred Buchanan and a crew would build a new Gorman Bros. Circus to tour in 1934.

1934

Tom Gorman, a resident of New York City, had been a motion picture and vaudeville executive for a number of years. He had worked for RKO pictures and also managed the New York Hippodrome. His first experience in outdoor show business was with the Walter L. Main Circus in 1932. Pat Casey, who had been a power in vaudeville and at the time was treasurer of the Variety Managers Association, was associated with Gorman on the 1934 circus.

The first *Billboard* account of Gorman's new show came in the January 20, 1934 issue in a story headlined: "Say Buchanan will manage new show." Dated Jersey City, New Jersey, January 13, it mentioned "Dame rumor" suggested Fred Buchanan had joined with Tom Gorman and Pat Casey in the operation of a new circus. Buchanan was to be the manager. Gorman was to be involved in an executive capacity, and Casey as the man behind the scenes, a function he had fulfilled for a number of years with the Main Circus.

The piece noted that Buchanan and a crew were framing an outfit in Jersey City, occupying the site of an abandoned Ford auto plant. The title of the new show would be Gorman Bros. Circus.

Gorman and Casey formed the Mangor Corporation as an operating company. General offices were opened at 1600 Broadway, New York City. The division of ownership between Gorman and Casey

GORMAN BROS. CIRCUS

Seasons of 1934-38

By Joseph T. Bradbury

is not known, but it is assumed Gorman held the larger share.

In March the *Billboard* reported that Burns O'Sullivan, veteran circus executive, had been signed by Gorman as superintendent of the show. It was announced that Jack Bell had been signed to furnish a ten piece band for the coming season.

Frank Mara, who lived in Jersey City during the years Gorman Bros. was on the road, states that in the fall of 1933 he

Gorman Bros. half sheet poster used in 1935-36 when Poodles Hanneford was the feature attraction. Title is in red on black at the top lettering in white on green in center, and on red in the circle. Black used for shading and show times print and as background at bottom of sheet. Hank Gaffney Collection.



heard that a circus was to winter in the city. He recalled it was already called Gorman Bros. The winter quarters was located in a former lumber company at the western end of St. Paul Avenue in Jersey City. This was literally the "gas works" area. Mara continued, "There was a fairly large open area at one end of the building and another along side it under the shadow of the Pulasky Skyway." Mara recalled seeing a small bus lettered World Bros. Circus being pushed into the building. The building was rumored to have been used as a warehouse in the 1920s for either Bartel's or Ruhe's wild animal importing company. Years later he heard unverified stories of animals escaping there and police being called to machine gun them.

Mara said: "In the spring of 1934 I watched some of the Gorman Bros. preparations there. The menagerie was enlarged and I saw men loading bears and other animals from shifting or shipping cages into truck cages. I also saw Ray Goody practicing on his wire rigged in a corner of the building. Jap the elephant of course was there."

The April 7 *Billboard* reported that Gorman Bros. had signed acts and executives. Announcement was made that P. N. Branson was to be general agent; J. Hervey, contracting agent; Fletcher Smith, press agent ahead, and Eugene Belasco, press agent back.

Acts were to include, Christiansen's Stallions; Max Gruber's Oddities of the Jungle; Lorraine Wallace's lions; Ray Goody's somersaulting tight wire; the riding Hodgins and the Ross Brothers, comedy acrobats. Rex Cole was to be in charge of the wild west contingent which would feature Buzz Barton. Jack Bell was to have the band. Side show was to be under the direction of Mack Kassow and Julius Kuehnle, who currently had a freak unit in vaudeville. The show was to travel on about 40 trucks.

A shorter item in the same issue said that Blacky Freeman had he would be in charge of the Gorman Bros. canvas.

The April 21 *Billboard* reported P. G. Lowry's minstrel band would be with the side show. The show was scheduled to open in Jersey City during the week of April 23.

Opening day for the 1934 Gorman Bros. season was April 25 in Jersey City,

The May 5 *Billboard* reviewed the opening: "Gorman Bros. Circus, a new one-ring organization put out by Tom Gorman, played its first stand of the season here Wednesday and gave four shows.

The first, third and fourth shows gave the appearance of America, 1927. The second show was plenty big too, but suffered in comparison. The other three were of the straw variety, with every seat occupied and every other inch of space. There were no spectators in the 34-foot ring or handling from the poles, but at one time it looked as if some of the good people of this town would have to be placed there. General admission is two bits, extra for reserves. Merchant tickets, with a 10 cent service charge played a big part in the phenomenal business.

Unusual 1934 Gorman ad listing two stands. Pfening Archives.

"Show was on a fine lot, at North Street and Central Avenue. Ringling-Barnum played it two years ago and mopped up. Jersey City folk have always come out big for outdoor amusements. They proved it again Wednesday, Gorman being the first to get in here this season. Estimated 15,000 people attended four shows. During the third show thousands were in line to buy ducats for the fourth. A special detail of policemen was on hand throughout the day and evening.

"The side show, operated by Mack Kassow and Julius Kuehnell, did an equal classification of business. So much business there wasn't sufficient room on the inside. Maybe that's an understatement. It did too much business. Caused Kassow and Kuehnell to order a middle from John Martin, tent man, who was on the lot. The canvas increase was delivered in New Brunswick, Thursday and set up in Camden yesterday.

"But here's the payoff. The weather was the sharpest of the spring semester. 'Mr. Thermo' crept way down and the folks crept into their overcoats. Even

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the stalwart cops were shivering. America must be waking up.

"Show itself was in the routing process, with nary one rehearsal. Even so, there was sterling stuff in it, with plenty of horses, combination animal acts and a pip of a tight-wire turn, to mention the predominant items. Christiansen's stallions, beauties, finished the show. Max Gruber's Oddities of the Jungle, elephant, zebra and dog, a turn as famous as its

has the military ponies. The clowns are the Ross Brothers and the Lelands. The latter act is the six Lelands, who have the teeterboard inning, and they make it a whirlwind. Music is by Victor's band, and Buzz Barton is the cowboy star who will probably frame a concert shortly. Susie the elephant-skin girl is on a stage in the menagerie with Kuehnell presenting her. It's a good thing that such a sure-fire attraction is there. The menagerie is pretty weak. Susie went on the air Wednesday over a local station and told listeners-in about herself. In addition to that, she's billed heavily in the ads and on throw-aways.

"Tom Gorman is the manager and Burns O'Sullivan superintendent. Fred



Gorman Bros. big top in 1934. Gordon Carver collection.

master who is also equestrian director. Gruber hasn't been in that function since he had a show in Mexico about eight years back. Christiansen also comes on again with a high-school horse and pony. Lorraine Wallace was in the steel cage with a quintet of lions. The trainer is mourning the loss of lion, Lucky, who succumbed to pneumonia. The Hodginis have a principal riding act and another one later on in the comedy turn. Ross Brothers and the Lelands have an inning with table tricks. There's another elephant, Jap, who is worked by Nellie. On the tight wire is Ray Goody, whose top feat is a series of slides on the wire and swiftly turning around as he nears the wire end. He does a foot slide in another section of the show. He is pretty good. Mrs. Cole executes a cloud swing and later on an iron jaw. Stafford

Buchanan is routing the show and J. Hervey contracting, with Fletcher Smith the advance press agent. Eugene Belasco the p. a. back. Harry Strause and Jimmy Dugan are the bannermen. Felix Patti was officiating at the front door while waiting to put his attraction, Tarzan, Human Ape, in the big top."

Frank Mara who was present at one of the Gorman opening day performances, recalled: "The show opened in Jersey City, billing itself in the papers as a railroad show. I caught it on a cold April evening after they had given three performances. I heard someone on the show say the police had stopped the sale of tickets at the previous show. I made it into a packed last show. My impression now is of a fairly good-sized performance. My previous experience being of the large railers, I believe Gorman Bros. in its first season was pretty good sized with well known acts.

"The big top was about a 110, possibly a 120 with middles of a good size. [Gordon Carver who saw the show in 1934 says the top was a 120 with two 20s and one 40 foot middle.] Trucks were a nondescript collection and mostly unlettered. [Later photos indicated several trucks were lettered, probably some done after the season began.] The office wagon I believe was a red painted straight job resembling



Gorman Bros. Circus midway in 1934. Gordon Carver collection.

a former moving van. A good sized menagerie top was not too well filled. There were some cage trucks, Jap the elephant, some horses, and possibly Max Gruber's elephant and zebra. There was also a big platform for Susie, the elephant-skinned girl. The big turnout was of people used to seeing the large railers, Ringling-Barnum and Sells-Floto in Jersey City. I remember as I came out a woman behind me was wondering where 'all the horses were.' She no doubt expected to see a large railroad show. The Gorman show used posters printed on an orange or yellow colored stock."

From the review it was evident the report saying Jack Bell would be band leader was incorrect. The performance had some top notch acts, several of which had or could have appeared in the programs of larger railroad shows. One was the Joe Hodgini riding troupe which was right up there with the best. Another fine act was Jorgen M. Christiansen's stallions.

Max Gruber's Oddities of the Jungle was another unusual but interesting act in the 1934 Gorman performance. The author saw this act two seasons later on the 1936 Tom Mix Circus. Gruber presented an elephant, zebra, and Great Dane dog in the center ring. I had never before seen anything quite like it. Fortunately, bits of the act can be seen in videos of the Mix show.

The Jersey City opening was on a Wednesday and the show moved the next day to nearby New Brunswick, followed by Camden, and on the final day of the week the show was in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. Following the practice of most shows in those years no Sunday performances were given. The next week began with a stand in Wilmington, Delaware, then it moved back to Pennsylvania for Lancaster, Reading, Hazleton, Allentown, and Easton.

The May 13 *Billboard* ran a piece headlined: "Motor shows flock to New York sector." It said Ringling-Barnum was just about completing its Madison Square Garden run when Gorman Bros. started in Jersey City to immense business.

Gorman then went further out in New Jersey and was heading toward Pennsylvania. The show was due back in Plainfield, New Jersey on May 7. Jimmy Heron's World Bros. was slated for Hyack on Monday, New Rochelle, Tuesday, then was to move away from metropolitan New York. Kay Bros. played some Jersey towns the same week. Downie Bros. and Tom Mix circuses were expected in the area.

The article also noted there was a report that Gorman Bros. had a blow down in Camden, New Jersey on April 27, and that opposition difficulties with billers were experienced at some stands.

A Gorman advertisement in the same *Billboard* wanted circus musicians at once, experienced cornets, clarinets, double tenor sax players were asked to wire. They had to be capable and reliable. Those interested were asked to contact Jack Henderson, band leader. Several stands were listed.

Evidently, the show was experiencing problems with the band. Jack Henderson was a different band leader from the one on opening day. After Plainfield the show played Morristown and Perth Amboy.

The show then ventured into New York at Stapleton, and back to Jersey for Eliz-

Semi No. 51, grandstand chairs, on lot at Newport, Rhode Island, Aug. 16, 1934. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.



abeth, and Wallington. Upon completion of the second full week of the season Gorman left the greater New York area and moved into New England. A tour of Connecticut stands began at Stamford on May 14, followed by Bridgeport, Waterbury, Meriden, New Haven, and New London.

The route at this point indicated Gorman's plan was to play the bigger towns, those accustomed to railroad shows. Frank Mara witnessed Gorman billing geared to create the impression that the natives would be getting a railroad show. With the demise of Sells-Floto after the 1932 season the nation had only three railers left, all Ringling owned. Ringling-Barnum was on 90 cars, Al G. Barnes on 30. The great Hagenbeck-Wallace show was increased from 40 to 49 cars for the 1934 season. Hagenbeck-Wallace presented a daily street parade. The larger overland shows, Downie Bros., Barnett Bros., and Sam B. Dill-Tom Mix combined, and some smaller outfits also offered a march. However, there was never any indication of Gorman parading during its three seasons. Even though there were only three railers touring that year there were plenty of overland shows, as many at the start of the depression. Competition was heavy, especially in New England where Gorman was heading. Gorman was counting on a merchant ticket plan for business.

The June 2 *Billboard* noted in a piece dated Providence, Rhode Island, May 26, that the circus season started there Sunday when Gorman Bros. set up on Melrose Park. First newspaper ads for the show carried the line, "only big circus coming." This was publicly denied by Ringling-Barnum's advance crew which arrived in town almost before the ink on the ads was dry. They immediately started hanging banners and lithos for that show's engagement on June 18. With matinee and night performances on Monday, May 21, the show drew about 4500 patrons. It moved across the river to East Providence for a one-day stand on Tuesday. The show then moved on to Massachusetts at New Bedford, 23rd, and Fall River the next day. Ray Goody and Olive

Moran announced their engagement. The wedding was set to take place in Fall River, Massachusetts on May 24.

J. B. Swafford, general agent of Lewis Bros., wrote in the June 16 *Billboard* that he visited several shows in New England that spring. He saw World Bros. at North Attleboro, Gorman Bros. at East Providence, Downie Bros. at Waterbury, Connecticut, and Beverly Bros. in the same state at Windsor Lakes.

An unidentified scribe made extensive notes on the Gorman show when it played Fall River, Massachusetts on May 24. The information follows:

Trucks

- 1 pole truck
- 1 office truck
- 1 light plant truck
- 3 cages (semi-trailer, 3 compartments each)
- 12 trucks for baggage and stock
- Christiansen's horse truck
- Hodgini horse truck
- Gruber's truck
- 2 living trucks
- 6 living trailer
- Buzz Barton's living trailer
- Total 23 trucks and 7 trailers

Tents

- 4 pole big top (meaning 4 center poles)
- 4 pole menagerie
- 3 pole marquee
- 3 pole padroom
- 3 pole cookhouse
- 3 pole side show
- 2 pole pit show
- 1 pole juice joint
- 2 pole juice joint on midway.

Side show

1 bally platform, 2 ticket boxes, and 9 banners (minstrels, Chinese torture chamber, Hindu needle mystery, entrance banner, half and half [man-woman], palmistry, magician, freaks, minstrel). Attractions, each on a separate platform: seven piece black minstrel band; magician; snake charmer; fat girl; mentalist; half and half; sword box; Punch and Judy (not on platform). There were two lights on each center pole. There was no blowoff, meaning extra charge for viewing an additional attraction, often a cooch show in which the men in the audience were invited into a walled off area to see unclothed dancers for an extra charge.

Pit Show-1 ticket box, 1 banner of Spidora, illusion.

Prices-big show 25¢ (10¢ merchant tickets); grandstand chairs, 30¢; back end 10¢; concert, 10¢; pit show, 5¢, sideshow, 10¢.

Menagerie-2 camels; 2 ponies; 8 horses (Christiansen's Creamoline Stallions); 4 horses; zebra; elephant (Max Gruber's; Cage, 3 compartment, single lion in each; cage (3 compartment), black bear, black bear, polar bear; cage (3 compartment), 2 dogs in each. Big elephant Jap. The center of tent had a display of Terraplane automobiles (advertising tie-in), juice joint, and Susie, elephant skin girl on platform.

Big top-1 ring curb between second and third center poles,



Gorman Bros. marquee and menagerie tent. The top was a 60 with three 30 foot middles. Gordon Carver collection.

no rings between other center poles, Grandstand front side chairs, 4 sections, 9 high. Back side chairs, 3 sections, 8 high. Blues on ends. 8 piece band, 5 advertising banners, 2 lights on each center pole, 6 lights on track, 1 light by band.

Performance

No. 1 Four clowns with Joe Hodgini, also small dog tumbling, at ends of tent.

No. 2 Two clowns and four tables, table rocking, and three clowns tumbling.

No. 3 Center ring, principal riding act, lady using two horses.

No. 4 Track, five clowns in walk-arounds.

No. 5 Announcement by Jim McGee on Terraplane auto.

No. 6 Five clowns on track in walk-arounds.

No. 7 Over center ring and ends swinging ladders, single ladies.

No. 8 Center ring and track, Jorgen Christiansen on high school horse, announced by Julius Kuehnle.

No. 9 Center ring, 6 clowns, toothache gag.

No. 10 Track, Buzz Barton concert announcement by Jim McGee.

No. 11 Center ring, Ray Goody's wire act.

No. 12 Center ring, four clowns with Joe Hodgini boxing match.

Semi No. 17, carrying camel and poles, on the Newport 1934 lot. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.



No. 13 Center ring, lady working a dog on turntable, 5 ponies, four dogs, two monkeys riding ponies, and bucking mule.

No. 14 Over center ring, cloud swing act, lady performer.

No. 15 Center ring, Joe Hodgini, riding act, 4 people, 4 horses.

No. 16 Center ring, four clowns, hypnotist gag.

No. 17 End of tent, double trapeze, man and woman.

No. 18 Center ring, Christiansen's 8 stallions and a black pony. Finishing on track with hind leg walking horse.

No. 19 Track, five clowns in walk-arounds.

No. 20 Track, four cowboys, concert announcement by Jim McGee.

No. 21 Center ring, teeterboard, six men and one woman, followed by tumbling on track.

No. 22 Over center ring, Ray Goody, foot slide from top of tent.

No. 23 Center ring, Max Gruber's zebra, elephant, and dog.

Photos indicate Gorman Bros. had an impressive canvas layout for a motorized show. With two rows of quarter poles the big top appears to have been a 120 round. There were four center poles. The center middle piece was much larger than the two end middles suggesting there were two 30s and a 40. Big top looked a bit odd.

The motorized equipment was a combination of semis and straight bed trucks. Surprisingly there were several large Mack Bulldogs, ordinarily found only with the railers during those years. Evidently Gorman acquired them from some unknown source as there were no such vehicles on the 1933 World Bros. show. Photographs suggest that the trucks were painted a dark red with lighter shaded lettering. The title may have been yellow, but not white.

Other stands in Old Bay State came at Brockton, Webster, Waltham, Lynn, Fitchburg, Greenfield, and Holyoke,



Gorman Bros. semi No. 85 on the Newport lot in 1934 carried Christiansen's dogs. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.

played on June 1. The next day the show moved over into Connecticut for a single date at New Britain. A Sunday run took the show into New York at Peekskill, followed by Middletown and Port Jervis.

The June 30 *Billboard* said that Betsy Ross, known as the Texas Tomboy, had recently joined as a feature in the Gorman Bros. concert. Accompanied by her father, mother and sister, she arrived on the show from California. She carried two horses in a stunning new truck and trailer. Miss Ross was an expert trick rider and rifle shot. She appeared in the movie, *Fighting with Kit Carson*, then playing in New England towns.

After three New York dates the route carried the show on another visit south to the Keystone State. The first date was at Carbondale on June 7 followed by West Pittston and Berwick to complete the sixth full week of the season.

Another week of Pennsylvania stands followed Tamagua, Shenandoah, Ashland, Shamokin, Sunbury, and Williamsport. Gorman went back into New York at Elmira on August 16, then played Auburn, Oswego, two days in Rochester and Batavia. The ninth week found Gorman in three more New York cities, Geneva, Ithaca, and two days in Binghamton. A two day stand in Scranton, Pennsylvania finished the week.

After Scranton, it was back to the Empire State on July 2 at Courtland, followed by three days in Syracuse. Two days in Utica completed the week. The eleventh week began in Amsterdam, then Gloversville, two days in Schenectady, and two in Albany. Unfortunately the *Billboard* published no information on Gorman's business in this area. Readers would have especially liked to have known how this smaller motorized show fared in the larger towns of upper New York state with multi-day dates.

The July 21 *Billboard* carried an informative article telling of Gorman's returning to New York City: "New York

City will have a truck show, probably for the first time, or at least the first time within memory of local old timers. Gorman Bros. is the show. It played at Gloversville on Tuesday, Schenectady, Wednesday and Thursday and Albany yesterday and today. For tomorrow and Monday the stand is Kingston, then Poughkeepsie and

Newburg. From the latter point the show moves to upper Manhattan to play the Dyckman Oval on July 19. It will then play a three day date opposite the Yankee Stadium, occupying the lot which had Hagenbeck-Wallace last summer. Dates for the Bronx engagement are July 20-21, and it is understood at this writing that both city-proper stands are devoid of auspices. Bronx date also takes in Sunday.

"It was learned definitely that Gorman is also the organization that will play the Westchester YMCA Country Club Festival, in Rye on August 2-4. Last week's story had H-W playing it, although the report was unconfirmed. An important official connected with the show is understood to have made the negotiations.

"After completing the Yankee Stadium three-day, the show will move to nearby Long Island for a week of one-day stands. It may be an auspices hookup when it's nearer show day. Bronx date also takes in Saturday.

"Fletcher Smith, Gorman p. a., arrives in town this week and will stay for about three weeks. He is using the *Bronx Home News* exclusively for that borough's engagement and the *Daily Mirror* for Long Island tie ups. Admission prices were to be stepped up a bit.

"World Bros. preceded Gorman in Westchester County by playing Harrison (near Rye) on Wednesday and White Plains on Thursday. It then turned toward Jersey spots."

The route provides detailed information of the dates in the New York metropolitan area. Gorman showed two days in Jackson Heights, two in Flushing, one in Queens, two in Jamaica with singles in Hempstead, Lynbrook, and Port Washington. Three days were played in Rye. A final week of dates in the area began at Huntington on August 6 followed by Port Jefferson, Greenport, Southampton, Patchogue and

Babylon. A Sunday run took the show all the way to Westerly, Rhode Island and a return visit to New England.

While in the New York area the August 4 *Billboard* published an article headed "Gorman circus not to be sold." The report explained that the *Billboard* had received a report that negotiations were being conducted between Fred Buchanan, Pat Casey and Tom Gorman, for Buchanan to buy the show. Gorman emphatically denied that negotiations were being conducted with Buchanan or anyone else. He said he planned to hold on to the show indefinitely.

Buchanan's exact connection with Gorman is unknown. Early reports suggested that he was in charge of the routing, others said he was superintendent. However other people filled these positions. In all probability Buchanan served as an advisor to Gorman during the 1934 tour. Buchanan's long experience as a circus owner would have been of great value to Gorman, who had limited experience in outdoor show business.

On July 24 when the show played Jackson Heights, E. J. Kely, noted circus photographer, visited and reported the show had a good night's business. The next day in Flushing he took a shot of the show group.

The weeks around greater New York were not without problems. The August 11 *Billboard* said that Gorman played its date in Rye after legal tangles were ironed out. The article noted that an injunctions and civic protests flew thick and fast for several weeks in connection with the booking. The concerns were based on the status of ground on the Westchester Country Club in Rye, but the show finally was able to appear. An injunction had been granted prohibiting the engagement. Residents and others gave in when it was promised the club would admit only members and guests and would not sponsor circuses thereafter. The supreme court had issued the restraining order. The piece noted there was plenty to do about

Light plant at Newport 1934. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.



the affair and reams of publicity appeared in the Westchester and New York papers. The show was set up on the club's polo field. Business turned out to be only so-so.

Frank Mara recalls that Gorman Bros. once had to pay a \$6,000 judgement due to a truck accident in the New York metropolitan area. He could not remember the exact date nor circumstances. If correct this amount would have been a major setback for a show such as Gorman in those depression years.

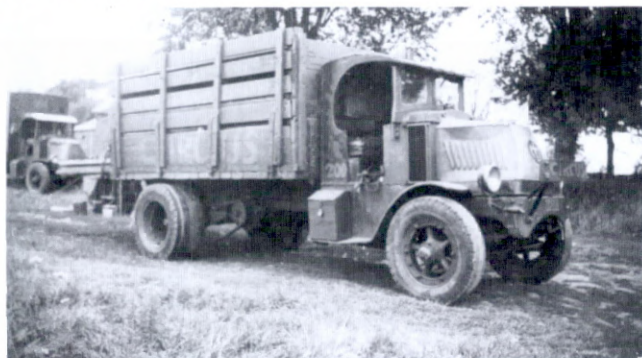
In mid-August it was announced that Gorman Bros. advance press representative Fletcher Smith had severed his connection with the show. He was replaced, but his successor was not immediately named by the *Billboard*.

On the second visit to New England, after playing Westerly on August 13, the show went into Connecticut for Norwich, then returned to the Nutmeg state for Pawtucket and Newport.

For several days the show moved back and forth between three states, Rhode Island, with another date in Bristol; and in Massachusetts, with Plymouth, and Northampton; and Connecticut, with New London (evidently for a second visit if the route is correct as the show also played there on May 19), Manchester, Bristol, and Danbury, played on August 23. This was the final stand in New England. The show next went to Mt. Kisco, New York, followed by Jersey stands at Hackensack, and Trenton, and finally back into Pennsylvania with dates at Philadelphia, York, and Chambersburg. Moving westward, then southward fast the show played Martinsburg, West Virginia, and afterwards Harrisonburg, Virginia.

After returning to New England and later movement southward virtually all *Billboard* information on the show ceased. This is often a sign that things were not well, but not always. There was one bit of news on a lighter side near the end of the season saying that the Gorman show kids recently had conceived the idea of having a daily newspaper. At first there was

Mack truck No. 200 on the 1934 Newport lot. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.



only one copy created by one finger using the hunt and peck system on a typewriter which they would allow any "subscriber" on the show to read. Subscribers flocked to them in such numbers at 2 cents a copy or five cents a week, "payable in advance," it was necessary to enlarge their plant. They took \$3.00 from the treasury to purchase a Hecktograph, paper, ribbons etc, and began getting out 50 copies daily. The paper was named the Gorman Bros. *Spec-Tater*. *Billboard* received copies of numbers 6-7-8, all filled with news of individuals, humor and headlines a la a big newspaper. The executive staff consisted of Betsy Ross, 12 year old trick rider and fancy rider, The Texas Tomboy, editor in chief; Joey Hodgini, 10 year old top mounter with the Joe Hodgini riding act, managing editor; Tommy Hodgini, 7 year old brother of Joey, treasurer; June Ross, 9 year old sister of Betsy, star reporter; Billy Heverly, 8 year old daughter of the superintendent of transportation and "Big Bear" Leland, 6 year old son of the Sensational Lelands, cub reporter. All the prop boys who "see all and know all" were also on the editorial staff.

A long Sunday run on September 2 took Gorman Bros. into the North Carolina textile area. The initial stand was at Madison the next day. It was followed by Reidsville, Lexington, Ablemarle and Charlotte. Monroe was the final stand of the season on September 8.

The September 22 *Billboard* told the story of Gorman Bros. and Lewis Bros. ending their seasons prematurely. The widespread textile strike was given as the reason. The article said Gorman Bros. had brought its season to a close at Monroe, North Carolina, September 8 and that the paraphernalia had been shipped to winter quarters. Tom Gorman was quoted as staying the show would close at Monroe "owing to the textile conditions." Gorman

returned to New York and told the *Billboard* conditions down here were terrible so he thought it best to bring the season to an end. Other notes said that Christiansen's stallions moved to Jackson, Tennessee to play the West Tennessee District Fair. Ray Goody and the Ross Trio returned to New York City. Several



This Mack was loaded with ring curbs and other props at Newport, 1934. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.

performers joined Downie Bros. It noted that Rex Cole and the Hodgins were taking out a small circus unit with William Newton Jr. to play an area away from the South.

The previous week *Billboard* carried an informative article concerning the textile strike, pointing out that carnivals in the effected region had not been hurt as were some circuses. Lewis Bros. Circus was in Maryland where the show found business seriously off. In consequence Lewis cancelled all of its remaining Southern dates. William Hamilton of Barnett Bros. reported business in the Alabama mill towns favoring the strike had been very bad with practically no attendance. In towns where the mills were operating under guard, he said business had been very light. People were afraid to venture out, fearing disorder on the grounds or streets, especially at night. Three towns where the mills were shut down had been played to poor business. Barnett Bros. cancelled LaGrange, Georgia that was considered the seat of trouble in the region. At Opelika, Alabama where there were a couple of mills working, Barnett had not encountered any trouble and did fair business.

George Engesser, owner of Schell Bros. Circus, wired that he had found good business in Georgia. Schell had not played any textile towns since strike started. Charles X. Allen of Beverly Bros. had escaped the strike region by playing Virginia. Russell Bros. in North Carolina, Mighty Haag in Tennessee, and World Bros. in North Carolina had also avoided the strike.

Even though some shows continued their routes, Gorman didn't want to risk further problems so far away from home. The textile strike of 1934 was serious business. South Carolina police had killed nine strikers. Georgia Governor Eugene Talmadge had called out the national guard. The Guard made wholesale arrests of strikers, jailing them in Atlanta at Ft.



Max Gruber's elephant and zebra on the Gorman lot in Easton, Pennsylvania in 1934. Circus World Museum collection.

McPherson. Reporters at the time called it an internment camp.

The strike was short lived but the violence caused by strikers, strike-breakers, and police set back union efforts to organize southern textile workers for decades. Some areas never were again unionized. The effected mills soon resumed operations but by then the 1934 fall circus season was over. Other industries and agriculture had made a modest recovery in the South. As a result Downie Bros., Hagenbeck-Wallace and Ringling-Barnum had very profitable tours in the area.

Although *Billboard's* first report said Gorman Bros. had returned to the Jersey City quarters, it actually moved to a new location at Campgaw, New Jersey. It was still close to the show's general offices in New York City.

The new Gorman quarters were about 35 miles northwest of the former Jersey City site. Campgaw, named after an Indian tribe in northern New Jersey, would be the winter home for Gorman Bros. for the next two years. A circus wintering in town was big news. The September 13 edition of the *Wyckoff News* carried this article: "Lions, bears and one real elephant and a large one, are visitors in Campgaw this week. They are putting up

Mack semi No. 100 carried seats, shown here at Newport in 1934. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.



for the winter at the Exhibition Tent Company grounds.

Hank Gaffney said he visited the quarters site many times. It was owned by the Bish family who were in the tent rental business. Gaffney recalls the area was quite spacious with a number of buildings. It was located on Campgaw Avenue, now known as Franklin Avenue. Following World War II the town's name was changed from Campgaw to Oakland.

Al House, who currently lives in Oakland, drives by the former Gorman quarters site every day. He reports it is located directly across Franklin Avenue from the former K-8 school building, now demolished. The quarters property was approximately 180 feet wide by 320 feet deep. A lumber company later occupied the site. Three sheds remain, approximately 21 x 64, 21 x 60, and 36 x 100. A concrete foundation of a former building remains on the property.

1935

Nothing appeared in the trade press concerning Gorman's plans until the March 23 *Billboard*. A short piece said that Poodles Hanneford had signed his act with Gorman Bros. Circus as the feature for the coming season. The show was scheduled to open in a Staten Island town on Easter Sunday, April 21. The Clarksonians flying act; Ray Goody, tight wire performer; and Capt. Walker and his mixed wild animal group had also been signed. Gorman said he would bill his show as Gorman Bros. 3 Ring Circus. It was to have a 120 foot top with three 40s. The side show had not as yet been set.

The article stated Gorman planned an enlarged menagerie built around Jap, the big elephant. Arrangements had been made with the Manchester, New Hampshire Zoo for additional animals.

The next *Billboard* notice said that plans for Gorman to open on Staten Island East-Sunday had been changed. Instead it was to bow outside Hackensack, New Jersey, on Good Friday. Other Jersey dates would soon follow in Jersey City and Plainfield. The show was also to play Port Richmond on Staten Island. Big show performers and other personnel were currently being contacted.

The 1935 circus season was one of the most talked about in years. Veteran show managers Jess Adkins and Zack Terrell launched their new 35 car Cole Bros.-Clyde Beatty Circus. It was to parade and would provide rail show competition for the Ringling interests for the first time since 1931. The trio of Ringling-Barnum, Hagenbeck-Wallace-Forepaugh Sells, and Al G. Barnes gave the nation a total of four railroaders. Hagenbeck-Wallace had tacked on the Forepaugh-Sells title to keep it out of public domain. The show was cut back to 40 cars and dropped the daily march. Downie Bros., Tom Mix, and Barnett Bros. were the largest of the truckers. Gorman opened the 1935 season at Hackensack, New Jersey on April 20.

The April 5 *Wyckoff, New Jersey, News* noted the departure of Gorman Bros. to open the new season: "On Friday Gorman Bros. Circus, which has been stationed at the Exhibition Tent Co. all winter, pulled stakes and officially inaugurated the 1935 season at Hackensack on Saturday. With their equipment all newly decorated the circus presented a thrilling spectacle as it left dear old Campgaw."

The same edition of the *Wyckoff News* carried this story: "The surest sign of spring and coming summer, even if the leaves on the trees have failed to bud this year, was seen in Wyckoff Friday morning of last week. It was the circus in town."

"Unfortunately for the many children that gathered around the bright newly painted wagons, resplendent in gaudy red and yellow, the circus was here only for a stop-over on their way from Campgaw to Hackensack where they opened the season and stayed just long enough to water the elephant, give the men time to get a bit of breakfast and line up the wagons for the start of the trip that will wind throughout the season down through Southern towns and back over eastern roads.

"The children enjoyed the sight, nevertheless, and gathered early around the elephant Jap, which took most of their attention. She is the largest elephant in captivity and became quite famous during her stay at the Exhibition Tent Company's quarters where the circus was quartered for the winter. She had submitted to scientific tests and was locked in an air tight compartment several hours each day during the experiments.

"She also captured the limelight at Ridgewood last fall when she paraded in a town celebration. Covered with a blanket that bore the alphabetically signs made notorious by the New Deal and, in the center, in large letters, the famous GOP. After that display, which took the Ridgewood Democrats off their feet, it was rumored Jap was taken off relief.

"Jap also played a prominent role at

Trenton for the inauguration of Governor Harold Hoffman in January when she led the parade decked in gold and blue. The circus men were busy for several weeks at Campgaw getting ready for the tour. They painted all the wagons and repaired the equipment. Several animals in addition to the elephant were housed in for the winter in Campgaw."

The May 4 *Billboard* reviewed the show's opening: "With a larger big top and a three ring spread, Gorman Bros. Circus opened its season in Hackensack, New Jersey, the past Friday for a two-day stand. It then moved into Staten Island, playing Stapleton (Sunday) and then Port Richmond before returning New Jersey at Jersey City (North Street and Central Avenue show lot), last year's opening spot for Tom Gorman's organization."

"There was top biz at early stands. In Jersey City the first two performances were jammed with plenty of customers on straw. They are averaging three shows a day so far and it'll be four here and there. Geared at a 25-cent general admission, with same for reserves, outfit should click all over when weather is favorable."

"Top measures 120 with three 40s and most of the performance right now is concentrated in the center ring. One of the high acts, the Flying Clarkonians, is experiencing rigging trouble and is not working. Performance is a little raw yet, but should routine itself by the time the Pennsylvania towns are played, which are slated for the end of the week. Burns O'Sullivan is routing it. O'Sullivan doubles back regularly to help put up the show, his capacity the last few years with Gorman."

"Feature is the Poodles Hanneford riding act, still one of the standout riding turns of them all. Poodles is said to be working under a fancy arrangement. Surrounding him are the following acts: Leland troupe, expert with teeterboard, comedy boxing and clowning; Miss Ora, sensational cloud swinger who works up high on a bar and has a load full of amazing gymnastics at her call. Her two children are with her, one of them assisting in the act. Torelli with dogs, ponies and comedy mule; Lancasters, three people comedy bars. [One of the Lancasters was Burt, later a well known actor.] Ray Goody, tight wire, with Miss Clarke and Mary Lane scheduled to work in the outer rings, but not seen at this show; Ladder ballet solo by Erma Lee; Adele Nelson's Elephants, another prime favorite, with three bulls. Gorman has his pachyderm, too, making four with the show, and Felix Patty with Aga, the Human Ape."

"Tex Merchant heads the concert and they are packing them at 10 cents Merchant has six head of wild west stock and Hanneford brings on his seven steeds for a 13 total. Hanneford is also working in concert."

"Staff: Tom Gorman, general manager; Burns O'Sullivan, general agent; Jean Belasco, press agent ahead; and Harold Corbett, with show; Al Gruber (son of Max Gruber), treasurer; L. Buckner, superintendent and boss canvasman; James McGee, superintendent of tickets; C. J. Bowman, legal adjuster; Bert Bertini, props; Ralph Jones, menagerie; Bert Nelson, cookhouse; Mike Pine, boss billposter; Felix Patty, ringmaster; and Homer L. Lee, director of band. Bill Henry has the candy stands and Jimmy Bagwell, candy floss, pop corn and eating stands. Joe Bosco has two kid rides on the lot. Menagerie top is 70 with three 30s. There are four bulls, a monkey cage, a bird and pelican cage, three lions, two bears and deer in the menagerie."

"Punch Dowdney is inside manager of side show and is also lecturing, with B. Smith handling the front and Doc Graham on one of the two ticket boxes. Dowdney presents Punch and Judy and magic, and attractions are Duke, skeleton dude; Miss Kane, tattooed girl; Hawaiian Trio; Floyd Fowler, frog boy; and Merxano, who also ballies. on blowoff, presented by Mrs. Fowler."

"Ringling billing crew plastered the town with paper on the New York engagement and the Gorman brigade billed right next to the Big Show in plenty of instances."

"Scores of circus and people from other show fields turned out to greet manager Gorman, including Billie Burke, George Degmon, Charlie Aldridge, Mike Cahill, one of the circus Ortons, Julius Kuehnle, Susie, the elephant Girl, Arthur Hill, Arthur Campfield and others."

One act not mentioned in the review was the trained lions worked by Capt. Vernon (Slim) Walker. He had been with Tom Gorman show s for several seasons,

The Gorman midway in Norristown, Pennsylvania on July 12, 1935. Pfening Archives.



sometimes working the lion act, and other times handling the elephant Jap."

Jap was a well known elephant. She was never trained to perform in the ring but did make spec and since she was quite large was billed as the largest elephant in captivity. Our first information on Jap places her on Orange Bros. and Moon Bros. Circus, owned by William (Honest Bill) Newton Jr. in 1926. She later appeared on several Newton owned shows, including Moon Bros. in 1927, Honest Bill Shows 1928-29, and Walter L. Main in 1930. Jap was also with the Main show when it was operated by Jimmy Heron, and in 1933 was on World Bros., owned by Heron and Gorman. Three other elephants were also in the 1934 menagerie, Myrtle, Tillie, and Jenny, owned by Louis Reed and Adele Nelson. The bulls worked in the performance."

Al House researched files of the *Bergen Record*, Hackensack, New Jersey for accounts of the Gorman opening. It appears the two day stand mentioned in the *Billboard* didn't come off. The show did not play the Friday date and performances given only on Saturday, April 20. Ads were run for "one day only" advertising heavily featured Poodles Hanneford and announced a 25 cent price for everyone. The prize was a piece run on April 15 which was headlined "Mighty, Magnificent Magnificent Matchless, Gorman circus comes to town." It was followed by this interesting disclaimer: "these press agents are irrepressible. This piece practically defies editing. Use your own judgement when reading this." The text read: "The mighty, and matchless Gorman Bros. Three Ring Circus according to the learned press agent the circus opens in Hackensack Saturday afternoon and night April 20 at Stilz Field on Route 4."

The circus now in its second season was seen here last summer and gave a pleasing performance with its many novelties and its exceptional low prices."

"Wintering at Campgaw, near Wyckoff, the Gorman show opens its season here and with an entirely new big top and menagerie tent, new seats, lighting effects and equipment. The circus folks have been gathering for the past month rehearsing daily and are in full readiness

for the opening performance on Saturday, April 20."

"Challenging all other circuses irrespective of price or size the press agent stated this year the show was enlarged to double its size with greater seating capacity and would be billed as the most co-



Gorman Bros. Mack truck coming off the Jamestown ferry enroute to Newport, Rhode Island May 26, 1935, the day before show date. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy collection.

lossally complete arenic and spectacular aggregation on earth.

"This season is strenuously signaled by the appearance of the famed sawdust and screen star Poodles Hanneford and his internationally famed family of riders.

"Fifty equally well known names comprise the program that includes the Clarksonians, death defining aerialists, and Ray Goody, sensational somersault king of the high wire, climaxing his act with an incredible dexterous slide for life, performed backward, starting at the top of the tent, completing a seemingly fatal and almost interrupted trip on a rope, executing a hair-raising, heart-halting flight thorough space.

"Ora, another sensation, taking the place of Lillian Leitzel is also featured. Young, and beautiful, she holds the center ring with her astonishing feats while her public offer rounds of applause for her daring, and unseemingly strength.

"The admission price is low in keeping with the times and each person purchasing an admission ticket is assured of a comfortable seat and also an inspection of the immense zoo. The doors open at 1 and 7 p. m. with the performance one hour later."

Fred Buchanan's name was not mentioned in any trade publication throughout the season. His presence on the show is only suggested by a long tradition that his final circus association was with Gorman Bros. Circus 1934 through 1936.

The show played a Sunday date at Stapleton, Staten Island after the Hackensack opening. Another stand on the Island at Fort Richmond, and on April 23 the company moved back into New Jersey for Jersey City, Elizabeth, Plainfield, and New Brunswick. Then the show moved on to Pennsylvania for a couple weeks. The initial stand came at Easton. Sticking to good sized towns, Gorman appeared at Bethlehem, Allentown, Pottsville, Ta-

maqua, Hazelton, Mahoney City, Shenandoah, Ashland, Mt. Carmel, Shamokin, Sunbury, Williamsport, Scranton, and Carbondale.

During this run through the Keystone State there was but one short note in *Billboard*. It said that Nelson Olim, former trouper, reported Gorman Bros. had a large crowd at the afternoon performance and a packed house at night in Shamokin.

The show

next went into New York at Middleton on May 15, and then played two stands in New Jersey at Englewood and Hoboken. Gorman returned to New York at Mt. Vernon and New Rochelle. The show then began its New England tour at Bridgeport, Connecticut, May 21.

The June 1 *Billboard* reported that Miss Ora, aerial gymnast, left the show May 17 at Hoboken. Ted Merchant, who was in charge of the after show, departed the next day in Mt. Vernon. The article said that Merchant was looking to join a rodeo. Miss Ora's children remained with the show. Poodles Hanneford, the top billing attraction, was then handling the after show with Rex Cole as the feature.

Newspaper ad used in Providence, Rhode Island in 1935. Pfening Archives.

It gave an additional evening performance due to strong business at Bridgeport. The show was the first of the season in the city made famous by Barnum. Elizabeth Hanneford joined Gorman that day and rode in the family act.

Other dates in the state were at New Haven, Meriden, Willimantic, and New London which were followed by Newport, Rhode Island. Two Massachusetts stands were next, New Bedford and Fall River. The show returned to Rhode Island for

Providence, then back to the Old Bay to play Brockton, Waltham, and Lowell.

A report in the June 15 *Billboard* claimed Gorman had recorded capacity crowds in several Massachusetts stands with turn aways at Waltham and Lowell. Other notes from the show said that Dr. Leon Blackburn, in charge of the front door, had celebrated his 85th birthday at Waltham. At Lowell Poodles Hanneford visited Bonnie Silver, eight year old son of the manager Nat Silver of the Strand Theater and other children at St. John's Hospital. Poodles brought them balloons and

other gifts and told the children stories about Shirley Temple, the child movie star. Hanneford had recently appeared in one of her films, *Our Little Girl*. Tom Gorman had the local newsboys and members of the high school band as his guests at a performance at Lowell.

Another story in the same *Billboard* said Gorman was the first circus of the season in Providence on May 30. It set up on a lot that would later accommodate Ringling-Barnum and Hagenbeck-Wallace. Capacity audiences were drawn at both performances. Harry Kiley, a rider, suffered a fall from his horse at New London, Connecticut on May 25. He was sent to St. Joseph hospital on a doctor's advice when the show reached Providence. A final item said that Gorman had the distinction of being the first circus in Rhode Island in 1935 with Kay Bros. close on its heels. Gorman was moving on 50 trucks and trailers.

A week later the *Billboard* told of the heavy concentration of shows then in parts of New England. No less than four were playing within a radius of 50 miles of Boston. Downie Bros., Hunt, Barnett Bros., and Kay Bros. were there, how-

Return of Your Favorite Circus

ONE DAY ONLY

THURS. 30

MAY

MELROSE PARK, PROVIDENCE

MAMMOTH-MATCHLESS-MAGNIFICENT

"The Aristocrat of the White Tops"

GORMAN BROS.

BIG 3 RING CIRCUS

THE INCOMPARABLE COMEDY EQUESTRIAN AND SCREEN STAR

POODLES HANNEFORD

AND THE HANNEFORD INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS FAMILY OF RIDERS

50 SUPERLATIVE & EXCLUSIVE FEATURES 50

RODEO & WILD WEST

IMMENSE ZOO

THE GREATEST AMUSEMENT VALUE IN THE WORLD

25¢ TO CHILDREN

INCLUDING MENAGERIE AND A COMFORTABLE SEAT

PERFORMANCE AT 2 & 8

RAIN OR SHINE

DOORS OPEN AT 1 PM

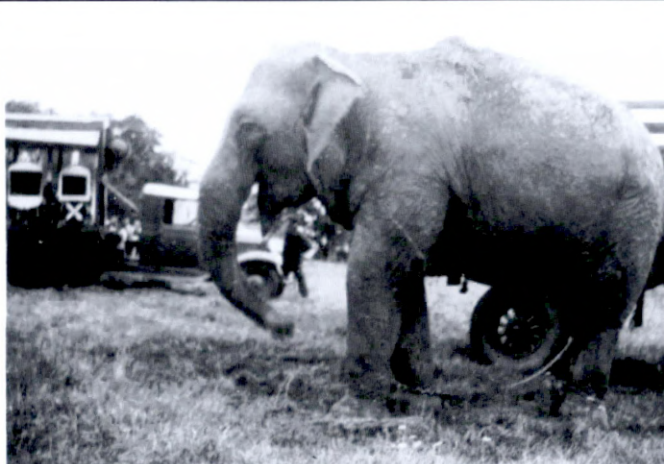
ever, there had been very little direct opposition. All were reporting satisfactory business. Newly enacted prohibitive motor trucks laws in most of the New England states had been a serious problem in arranging itineraries. There had been many changes in the proposed routes of all shows in the east. Williamsport, Pennsylvania had already seen four shows, Gorman, Barnett, Cole Bros., and Hagenbeck-Wallace. Gorman had been issued a permit to play Torrington, Connecticut on June 18 and Hagenbeck-Wallace on July 1.

Up to this date, if reports were correct, most shows in the New England area were enjoying fairly good business. Gorman's route next took the show into New Hampshire for stands at Manchester, Portsmouth, Concord, and Clarmont. These towns were followed by five in Vermont at St. Johnsbury, Burlington, Montpelier, Rutland, and Brattleboro. Two more dates in Massachusetts at Northampton and Holyoke and two in Connecticut at Torrington, and Waterbury, completed the New England tour. The show returned to New York at Peekskill on June 20, followed by Port Chester, and Yonkers.

There were no reports from the show during the final two weeks in New England. Harry Baugh, who often wrote for the *Billboard*, visited the show in Yonkers on June 22 and filed his report in the July 6 issue. He wrote that there was a light matinee and about a two thirds night house due to inclement weather. Performers had gone over big, every act getting a hand. At night Poodles Hanneford's troupe was compelled to take three bows. Other numbers scoring were Fred Stafford's dogs, ponies, and monkeys, Adele Nelson's elephants, and Ray Goody's wire act. Rex Cole's concert received a big percentage of the crowds and the side show did well. The show had several days of bad weather the prior week but manager Gorman informed the writer that he had no cause for complaint as business was better than he could expect. It was reported Louis Ingleman, who had been steward, left to join Famous Robbins Circus.

A week later the *Billboard* said Ray Goody had taken Eddie Ward's place as catcher in the Clarkonians act. Adele Nelson's elephants left after the Yonkers stand to play parks and fairs for the remainder of the season.

The show next moved onto Long Island and played Huntington or Glen Cove on June 24, depending on the source. The towns are only a few miles from each other. A day later Gorman made a rather long run back to Red Bank, New Jersey.



Gorman's elephant Jap on the Newport lot in 1934. Cutler photo, Ed Tracy Collection.

These dates were followed by Freehold, Burlington, Bridgeton, Morristown, Orange, Montclair, two days in Asbury Park, Mt. Holley, and Camden on July 8.

During this period there were few published reports about the show. One note in the July 20 *Billboard* said that E. J. Kely had taken a group picture of Gorman Bros. at Glen Cove, Long Island on June 24. He also photographed Hagenbeck-Wallace at Hackensack, New Jersey on June 27. On June 29 he shot the entire personnel of Beers-Barnes at Seaforth, Long Island.

The July 27 *Billboard* reported Gorman Bros. played Camden, New Jersey on July 8. The side show and cookhouse went down during a heavy downpour there. Two performances were given during the evening and the side show was patched up in time for the night crowd.

After Camden there are three missing dates in the route on July 9, 10, 11. On the 12th the show moved into Pennsylvania at Morristown, followed by Coatesville. Gorman was the second circus in Morristown. The show had a light matinee due to its not starting until 3:30 p. m. The big top truck broke down 24 miles from the city. There was a capacity crowd at night.

On July 15 the show played Wilmington, Delaware then returned to Pennsylvania the next day at Lancaster. The show remained in the Keystone State for the remainder of the season. Gorman played Reading, Lebanon, and two days in Harrisburg. The route carried it across the state to Lake Erie. Only one short notice appeared in the *Billboard*. This silence in the trade publication was a sure sign all was not well on the show. It wasn't; Gorman closed on August 7 at Erie, Pennsylvania. The equipment was returned to the Campgaw quarters.

The August 17 *Billboard*, under a New

York City, August 10 dateline read: "Gorman Bros. Circus, piloted by Tom Gorman and featuring Poodles Hanneford and the Clarkonians all season closed in Erie, Pennsylvania August 7. Show started season in New Jersey territory in the spring; and moved along more or less successfully for a time, but a number of mishaps, plus a spell of bad weather, wrought havoc, with several performers leaving. Some of the executive staff, including agent, Burns O'Sullivan and Jean Belasco, press agent, left the show earlier.

"A jinx has followed Gorman Bros for the last few seasons. Last year when everything appeared fine the show ran into the textile strike in North Carolina and was forced to call a halt weeks before the season should have ended under normal conditions.

"Tom Gorman could not be reached at his local office, an attache there stating that he was expected back on Monday. Performers were reported coming into New York, but some will undoubtedly join other shows. Others were making preparations to play fairs in the east."

A later report said that Jean Belasco and Billy Walsh formerly with Hagenbeck-Wallace had joined Frank Wirth's indoor circus. They had been appointed managers at respective towns where the show played. After this, there was complete silence in the *Billboard* on all matters about Tom Gorman and his show for the rest of the year.

The Wyckoff News on August 15 said: "Gorman Bros. Circus arrived in town this week and will establish winter quarters at the Exhibition Tent Company [in Campgaw]. About half of the outfit is still on the road and will arrive within the next few weeks. Jap, the big elephant, will again take up his residence here in his specially constructed home."

Jap, as usual, made news wherever she was. When a truck carrying her out to an event was wrecked she had to make a 35 mile walk back to quarters.

In the meantime over the winter Poodles Hanneford made the national press by his appearance in the stage production of *Jumbo* at the New York Hippodrome. The well received musical, produced by Billy Rose, starred Jimmie Durante. Hanneford would be available for the 1936 circus season. Big Rosie, who had been on Cole and Rogers in 1934, played the Jumbo roll in the production.

1936

Nothing was printed in *Billboard* about Tom Gorman's plans for the season until

an ad in the May 16 issue. The show wanted workmen in all departments, a baker and cookhouse steward.

The May 23 *Billboard* carried a piece reading: "Gorman Bros. managed by Tom Gorman, sprang a surprise by taking to the road again, opened in Hackensack yesterday afternoon to a good house and strawed them at night. Few people had figured Gorman to resume, having an early closing last season. A couple of weeks ago he made preparations to carry on. Among the acts are Poodles Hanneford and his riding contingent--late of Jumbo, with Poodles ring mastering; Clarkonians, Nelson's elephants, Ray Goody and others. Joe Basile contracted temporarily for the band. It's a two ring lay out. Show will be reviewed formally early next week."

Thus Gorman made an unexpected appearance on the 1936 circus scene with the first report being of its opening. Some changes were made in the circus world for the new season. Hagenbeck-Wallace was taken off the road, leaving only three railers. Ringling-Barnum was on 90 cars and its subsidiary, Al G. Barnes, on 30 cars. Adkins and Terrell's Cole Bros., also on 30, was in its second season. Leaders of the overland shows were again Downie Bros. and Tom Mix, but both had now abandoned their street parades. Cole Bros. paraded again as did several motorized shows. The street parade which had flourished among the mudders in the 1930s was headed downhill and would vanish before the end of the decade. There were quite a few new shows on the road in 1936. Most were rather modest motorized outfits. Two of them would tour through Gorman's expected New England territory, Maynard Bros. and Bockus & Kilonis.

The May 30 *Billboard* covered the Gorman opening: "After a corking opening in Hackensack, New Jersey on May 15, Gorman Bros. Circus played to good business in Port Richmond and Stapleton, Long Island on Saturday and Sunday and then moved back to the Skeeter State Monday when it was caught in the afternoon in Jersey City. Two shows, both capacity, were given that night. Daylight performance was also to a full house.

"Show has two rings, but only the center circle used at this showing and outfit is sans a menagerie, Tom Gorman, owner, figuring

it's best to have no animal stock at all than a mere handful. Show is in the advantage at this period because it starts right in to invade the money sections, and in most cases it's the first one in. Billing is abbreviated, lean being toward newspapers. Admission is 25 cents, 10 cents for reserves.

"Performance runs an hour and 15 minutes and is cheap at the money, containing fine material in Poodles Hanneford and his riding contingent; the Clarkes, jugglers; Lady Barbara's dogs and ponies; Ray Goody, tight wire; Adele Nelson's elephants and clowns, including the DeKoes, Johnny Judge and Billy LeFevre. Elizabeth, pretty daughter of the Hannefords, works solo on bareback horse, showing good timing and nice carriage. Ray Goody does a back somersault, and drunk bit and a number of other skillfully carried out routines. He also appears with the Hannefords. By way of displaying versatility he closes the show with a foot slide from the tent top to the ground. Goody had to cancel it in Jersey City due to high winds which made his assistants guy out the rope, causing him to topple. He managed to grab the rope and shimmy his way down.

"Lady Barbara works two ponies and a tribe of pooches and carries her chukker off capably. There's also a kicking mule in the layout. Clarkes produce the tricks of the juggling art in adept fashion. They finish with juggling of torches in conjunction with an acrobatic routine which makes this act an asset, being excellently costumed to boot. Merle Reger comes on a black steed for a high-school horse in-ning. The clowns fill the waits and branch out into their own spots with comedy boxing and other tomfoolery.

"Nelson's trio of bulls, worked by the expert Adele and two male handlers, are always interesting to watch, running the pachyderm pleasantries, including a baseball bit in which they are properly

Office-ticket Truck No. 1 on the Gorman lot in Easton, Pennsylvania, 1934. Circus World Museum collection.

equipped. A brief entry brings on all the animals in the show, as well as artists, preceded by three girls in the Clark act, who appear as drum majorettes. This closing was first created on the Ringling-Barnum Circus, where they toured last season. Joe Basile's band furnished the music, but unit has joined temporarily. George (Deafy) Denman led Jap, the show bull, in entry.

"Mack Kassow is managing the side show. The attractions are dancing girls; Al DeLenz, magic and Punch and Judy; DeMingo, fire-eater; DeWeiss, lion pawed boy and torture chamber, who is also inside lecturer; Joe Allen, contortionist; Edna, mentalist and snakes. Morey Schayer and Harry Bernstein are on the ticket boxes and Kascow makes the openings.

"On the staff are Sedgwick Meikle, treasurer; Tex Sherman, temporarily assisting Gorman; Jack Murray, superintendent; Harold Corbett, advance; Andy Flinn, electrician; L. L. Buckner, canvasman; Bob Stevens, bannerman; Mike Pyne, biller; Eddie Dunn, reserves; and William Post, publicity.

"Concert has Hanneford doing whip cracking, assisted by his wife and daughter; a talking pony; one of the Clark girls, trick roping, and a pair of trick riders. Big top is 110 feet round with two 50 foot middle pieces. Joe Bosco, New Jersey carnival owner, operated a kid ride at this stand. Snuffy Geddy has the eating stands, operating them for the show. A number of visitors showed up, including Phil Wirth, Billy Walsh and Vernon Reaver."

The review shows again the show had four elephants, Jap and the Adele Nelson-Louis Reed trio of Myrtle, Tillie, and Jenny. Deafy Denman, long-time boss of the Ringling-Barnum herd, was again in harness, this time handling Jap. She still hadn't been broken to perform in the ring but the press agents didn't let this out. An example can be found in the May 15, 1936 edition of the *Bergen Evening Record* covering the season's opener in Hackensack.

The article was headed: "Jap trumpets arrival of the new circus season.

"A satisfied trumpet from the mighty trunk of Jap, the world's largest, cleverest, and oldest elephant heralded the start of the circus season in Hackensack this morning.

"Strong men from the steppes of Russia, whip crackers from the land of down under, cowboys and cowgirls from the roaring west, a torture



man from the desert of Gobi were all on hand this morning at Stilz Field, to usher in another spectacular show under the big top.

"Fresh from three months practice at winter quarters at Campgaw, Gorman Bros. Circus with bands blaring, banners flying and cotton balls, pink lemonade and hot peanuts in profusion, set up their tents this morning like the Arabs and will quietly steal away tonight.

"Chip Chandler from Custer, Wyoming, and his high school horse were there; Poodles Hanneford, who just finished an engagement with Billy Rose's Jumbo in the New York Hippodrome; Prince Ali Bendow fresh from mystifying the crowned heads of Europe and Buddy Montana and his group of Indians, lusting for a bloody scalp, were all on hand to give Hackensack kids, from 6 to 60, three full houses of thrills this afternoon and night.

"Buck Newsome, no relation to the ace pitcher of the Washington Senators, and his hardy band of West Indians arrived this morning and pitched the big top in a little less than 25 minutes.

"Shortly after Jap, famed for his 35 mile walk to Campgaw when he was thrown from a speeding truck earlier this year, came in his private lorry.

"Ladeez and gentlemen, the most spectacular, colossal, stupendous, scrumptious show on the face of the globe—yes, you guessed it, next came the ringmaster.

"Entirely motorized, 35 trucks brought the caravan to Stilz field.

"Poodles Hanneford and his band of mighty equestrians came with five horses including a new white mare which Poodles admitted he had not seen since he bought it six months ago.

"No sooner had the motor lorry made its appearance when Jap had his appetizer, four bales of luscious hay, a sackful of peanuts, and a handful of sugar.

"Lissie, reputed to be the largest python in captivity, arrived. Sleeping soundly after its monthly meal of 4 chickens, six rabbits, and a few mice, it looked with doleful eyes at its master, Princess Slither.

"The torture man came next, comfortably seated on a spiked bed munching razor blades and broken glass.

"What are you going to have for breakfast?, the reporter asked as he scanned the mess tent where hundreds of persons were wolfing down mountains of flapjacks and gallons of coffee.

"You see that window pane



Gorman Bros. Circus poster featuring Poodles Hanneford. Pfening Archives.

over there, well, I'm going to start with that and then go over to Poodles tent and try to steal his straight razor for desert."

"Captain Jack Barnes, the strongest man in the world, strolled up, his muscles bulging under a silken polo shirt.

"I'm a little tired," he bellowed, "we had a flat on the way down here and I had to hold up a 5 ton truck with Jap in it for 15 minutes." His tall story didn't seem half so tall when he strode over to a weight marked 1,000 pounds lifted it lightly and did several juggling tricks with the pig iron dumbbell.

"Chief Silver Streak and a beautiful princess, Little Elk, fresh from the pueblos of Arizona, arrived on snow white horses. Chief Silver Streak pulled out his bow and arrow, shot a dart, speared a steaming flapjack.

"That's the way we eat in New Mexico, the Chief said with a decided New Jersey accent.

"The Sensational Lelands were there with their high wire paraphernalia, the

Gorman Bros. on the lot at Courtland, New York, July 14, 1936. Author's Collection.



equally sensational Eddie Straford and his dogs arrived next.

"And as a grand climax, the clowns looking slightly pale and forlorn, without make-up, came into the camp.

"The big day has arrived. The show starts at 2 o'clock and grandmother's demise will not be taken as an excuse by school officials this afternoon."

Much of the advance press, as was customary with all shows, was highly exaggerated, and colorful. At least Gorman no longer was claiming to be a railroad show.

After the Hackensack opening the show moved into the New York City area to play

Port Richmond, then Stapleton, before returning to Jersey City on May 18. The next day the show was in New Rochelle, New York. Gorman then made a fast trip to begin the New England tour with first stand at Bridgeport, Connecticut on May 20. Gorman was ahead of two other shows in the city. Downie was contracted there on May 26 and Ringling-Barnum was coming in on June 13. Other stands in the state followed Meriden, New Haven, and New London.

The June 6 *Billboard* covered the May 23 New London stand, stating the show had pulled in rather late after a 60 mile trek from New Haven. The lot was soft and the show had trouble getting on, but was up and set by noon. Attendance was big and side show was crowded all day. At New Haven three performances were given.

Cliff Beebe researched the files of the New London *Day* and found several stories about the Gorman 1936 stand. A reader with a photo of Jap with a lady seated on his head and another standing at his side appeared in the May 22 edition. The text read: "With a head full of wisdom and a trunk full of tricks, Tiny Jap, the largest elephant in the world takes her place as one of the leading attractions with Gorman Bros. three ring circus that comes to Davis Field tomorrow. Three inches larger than Barnum's famous Jumbo, Jap is probably the most intelligent elephant appearing before the public today. Estimated to be almost 100 years old, Jap is lively and playful. She eats four bales of hay each day in addition to the candy and peanuts that are fed her, and she rules all other elephants in the herd. Her performance with Alta Mae, her beautiful and talented young trainer is a delight and from the enthusiasm in which she enters into



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— PRESENT —



Gorman Bros. 3 Circus

her work she probably enjoys the performance more than her public.

"Poodles Hanneford, who recently closed with Jumbo, is the star of the circus, which is made up of 50 acts. Included are Ray Francis Goody, Buddy Montana and the Seven Sensational Lelands, and other names of fame in the circus world."

In addition to the regular Gorman ad, a special advertisement in the New London paper invited the public to be matinee guests of Tom Gorman. A coupon in the ad was to be presented with one paid admission allowing two people to attend the show. The ticket price was 25 cents.

Following New London the show played one date in Rhode Island at Newport. Gorman then began a run of ten Massachusetts stands at Fall River on May 26. On June 6 the show moved into New Hampshire at Portsmouth. After the New Hampshire dates the show played one more stand in Massachusetts on June 15 at Holyoke. The June 27 *Billboard* reported an accident had occurred late at night on June 16. When a sedan operated by a Charles Reardon piled into the rear of a Gorman truck, he was thrown through the windshield of his sedan while three circus employees were likewise pitched thorough the glass of their vehicle. All suffered cuts from flying glass.

The show moved westward through Connecticut playing Torrington, New Britain, Middletown, Derby, and Danbury. On June 21 it returned to its home state of New Jersey at Passiac, Elizabeth, Plainville, and New Brunswick. The route continued westward into Pennsylvania at Beth-lehem on June 25. Gorman stayed in the Keystone state until July 11.

Hot weather descended on the show and business dried up with it. The summer of 1936 was one of the hottest on record. Circuses throughout the mid-western and eastern part of the nation suffered from the heat. Several of Gorman's major performers left during the early part of July.

After Bloomsburg, two day stands were played in Wilkes Barre and Scranton. The *Billboard* broke a silence of several weeks and reported that the heat in Scranton

The Gorman letterhead used in 1936 was printed in blue with a red outline. Pfening Archives.

had soared over 100 degrees and kept attendance down there. The opening matinee there was an empty house. Violet MacDonald, a pony rider, collapsed from the heat.

A single date in Carbondale on July 11 was the final Pennsylvania stand before the show went into New York at Elmira. Courtland, Norwich, Oneonta, Cobleskill, and Catskill.

The August 1 *Billboard* said Gorman had cancelled Hudson, New York booked for July 27. It had been contracted by Tom Gorman on July 22 when he took out a license. This indicates the show was only booked a few days ahead and had little time for billing or newspaper advertising. The story said the cancellation came because the circus didn't want to compete with two other shows booked so close together. Another note said Poodles Hanneford, Adele Nelson's elephants, and Lady Barbara had left the show. One final item said that Sig Zeno attended the show at Carbondale, Pennsylvania back on July 6. He said there had been a three-quarters house in the afternoon and full house at night. It was the third year for Gorman in Carbondale. If the report was true Carbondale was one of the best stands in some time.

The final week began at Saugerties, New York on July 20, with Walden the

The Gorman big top in Courtland, New York July 14, 1936. The light plant is at left and a seat semi is at right. Pfening Archives.



next day. Monticello was played on July 22 and Liberty on July 23.

The show closed in Port Jervis, New York on July 24. The August 1 *Billboard* told the story: "Gorman Bros. Circus terminated its season on Saturday July 24 at Port Jervis, New York. After being on the road but for ten weeks, having opened in Hackensack, New Jersey on May 15. This

makes the third season Tom Gorman's organization has folded in mid-season. Last five weeks business has been way off, with first five, majority in New England, proving best of tour but below last year's take in the same area. Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey spots were poorly attended with Connecticut fair.

"Leland troupe, acrobats, headed for the west to play fairs. Ted Merchant, trick roper, rider and marksman will play Eastern fairs. Mack Kassow, manager of side show and Ray Goody wire walker, have gone back to New York to ready for Frank Wirth's Long Beach circus date. Destination of Juggling Clarkes, is unknown. Poodles Hanneford and his riding contingent left the show in June to appear at the Fort Worth Exposition. Some of the side show personnel are preparing to make fairs and celebrations. Gorman brought the equipment back to Campgaw, New Jersey winter quarters.

"Receipts after June 17 dropped steadily until virtually empty houses toward the finish caused Gorman to throw in the sponge."

The Gorman show was finished, Tom Gorman never again operated a circus. He kept Jap, her wardrobe and truck. Disposition of the trucks, tents, seats and other equipment is not clear.

Hank Gaffney remembered the canvas and poles were turned over to the Bish family, owners of the Campgaw quarters site. Gaffney suggests that this was done in payment for use of the property. The Bish tent rental business continued for several years, but was gone after World War II.

Burns O'Sullivan, who had served as Gorman's general agent and super-



The Gorman light plant semi on the WPA Circus in 1937. Pfening Archives.

intendent, became managing director of the WPA (Works Progress Administration) Circus in 1937. The show was operated under the Federal Theater Project, being administered by the WPA. Big Rosie, the elephant that had appeared in Jumbo at the New York Hippodrome, was a feature of the show during the indoor dates.

The WPA show went under canvas late in May, opening at 45th Street and Stillman Avenue in New York City. While little is known about the origin of the tents and trucks used by the show, photographs of the WPA equipment suggests much of the equipment came from Tom Gorman. The Gorman light plant was definitely there. So was Jap, handled by Capt. Vernon (Slim) Walker. The large bull was renamed Japino and was a feature of the circus. The circus was presented under a 100 foot big top with three 30 foot middles. The show also carried two dressing tents and a cookhouse. When not on the road the equipment was quartered in a warehouse on 49th Street in Manhattan.

Jap remained with the WPA show for two seasons. In 1937 the show played 26 weeks, all one week stands, under canvas. It reportedly attracted 225,000 patrons. A small admission was charged. The canvas season closed on October 9. The indoor tour resumed on October 30.

According to the Woodcock files, Jap was still owned by Tom Gorman in 1939-40. In 1941 the elephant was sold to the World of Mirth Shows, a large railroad carnival, and remained through 1943. In those years Terrell Jacobs had a circus on the carnival. In 1944 Jap was sold to Dailley Bros. and remained with that show until her death in 1948.

Al House recently located the remaining buildings at the former Gorman quarters site in Campgaw, now called Oakland, New Jersey. It was last used by the Franklin Lakes Building Supply Co.,

no longer in business. The site did not look suited for circus use. Gorman had used an available factory type location and had not constructed the usual buildings found in circus winter quarters. Two small shed-like structures still remain on the site.

Gorman's medium sized circus had a rocky history, having closed early in each of its three seasons. Well known acts like Poodles Hanneford, the Clarkes, Ray Goody and Adele Nelson's elephants must have been paid in full as they returned a second season. Gorman, like others without outdoor show experience, came and went in the circus business. Nothing is known about Tom Gorman after he sold Jap.

The author is grateful to Frank Mara, Hank Gaffney, Ed Tracy, Al House, Cliff Beebe and the Circus World Museum for help in the preparation of this article.

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Surviving newspaper records report the earliest known exhibition of a circus or menagerie in Newark, New Jersey, was on April 11, 12 and 13, 1820 when a show called Three Great Natural Curiosities appeared at Mr. Roff's Inn. The elephant Horatio, named in compliment of the ship which brought him to this country, was the feature. He was nine to ten feet high. This elephant, which had been exhibited in New York City the preceding year after its arrival in America on November 25, 1819, is believed to be the sixth elephant to arrive here. So far as available records are concerned it was the first to appear in Newark. However, we can be reasonably certain that others preceded it since Newark was by 1820 a town of some size for that time with a population of about 9,000. This show also had two Arabian camels, male and female, 2 years old.

The next traveling show in Newark of which a record can be found was Purdy, Welch, Macomber & Co's New Menagerie on October 15, 1833. For the times this show carried a very large number of animals and certainly must have been worth the 25 cents (children under 10, 12 1/2 cents) admission. The hours of exhibition were from 10 A. M. to 1 P.M. and 2 to 4 in the afternoon. Because of the poor lighting facilities then available, evening shows were not practical. Its ad read: "Occupying eleven spacious wagons in which are conveyed a great number of extraordinary animals never before" seen here. The caged animals were a lion, lioness and jackal in one "waggon." Another wagon carried the feature, a hippopotamus, probably a tapir. There were also two leopards, three jackals, two laughing hyenas, two ostriches, a tamandua or giant anteater 8 feet long and 2 1/2 feet high, an African gazelle, a South American panther, an anaconda serpent, an armadillo, plus many smaller animals, birds and monkeys. There was seating for 300 to 400 persons. The La-Fayette Military band of 10 pieces from New York City provided music for the show and on its entry into towns. There was no elephant, and the only animal that might have been led overland was a quagga, a species of zebra, now extinct. It was mostly a pale yellow with stripes only on its back, neck and head. There was no indication that a tent was used. Rather, the wagons were placed in a semi-circle surrounded by a canvas wall with the seats and band on the other side of the circle.

The year 1834 was the first in which Newark saw two shows. J. R. and Wm. Howe and Co's New York Menagerie

The Circus In New Jersey

PART I - NEWARK THROUGH 1849

By Gordon M. Carver

paid a visit on October 2 and 3. From the list of animals it is presumed that the show had no more than 10 or 11 cage wagons. These cages carried a tiger, a "gnoo" (show's spelling) or horned horse, two cheetahs or hunting leopards, a lion and lioness, a Java tiger, a jaguar, a spotted hyena and a striped hyena, a female leopard, an African pelican, macaws, parrots, a civit cat, pigs, caries, ichneumans, ponies, monkeys, an African ostrich and a South American ostrich or rhea. It also had the elephant Columbus which had been in America since 1817. For the first

This Purdy, Welch, Macomber ad appeared in an 1833 Newark *Daily Advertiser*. Author's collection.



WILL be exhibited near and adjacent to Mr. B. Day's Hotel on **TUESDAY** Oct. 15th, 1833, For One Day Only. Hours of exhibition from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. and from 2 to 4 P.M. Admittance at each of the stated hours of exhibition, 25 cents. Children under 10 years of age, half price.

PURDY, WELCH, MACOMBER & CO'S
NEW MENAGERIE
Of Rare Beasts and Birds.
 JUST IMPORTED FROM EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA.

Thus at one view, presents the grandest and most magnificent assemblage of rare Beasts and Birds ever seen in the United States. Occupying Eleven Spacious Wagons, in which are conveyed a great number of extraordinary Animals never before exhibited in this country, and to render it still more interesting, the proprietors have engaged the celebrated **LA FAYETTE MILITARY BAND OF MUSIC**, From New York, composed of Ten Members of the First Musical Talent.

IN THIS COLLECTION IS THE CAPTAIN **LION & LIONESS**, And JACK & LIZ, all in the same den
FOUR SPLENDID ZEBRA & B.
A BEAUTIFUL QUAGGA,
 The Only one ever seen in America.
THE GREAT TAPIER, OR
HIPPOPOTAMUS,
 Of the New World.
TWO BEGAL LEOPARDS.
 The GREAT VULTURE from the interior of Africa.

time there was a performance of sorts for "the keeper will enter the dens of the lion and lioness, and leopards and caress them with the greatest familiarity." While this was going on a band of 12 pieces provided a "rich treat."

The second show in 1834 was Purdy, Welch & Co's Grand Mammoth Zoological Exhibition which came to Newark for one day only on October 7. From its advertising we gather that it was somewhat enlarged from the year before. It used 60 horses to pull the cages and bandwagon or personnel carrier for the 10 piece Washington Military band from Philadelphia.

There were probably two or three other wagons carrying the seats provided for ladies and children, its three tents and other baggage. From a two column wide, 10 inch deep cut used in newspaper advertising, we can assume that the caged animals were basically the same as in 1833 with a few exceptions. There is no mention of the hippopotamus, but in its place was a horned horse or gnu plus a llama. However, the lead stock was significantly larger and varied. Importantly, there was now an elephant. Also we find both two-humped and one-humped camels as well as the quagga from 1833, and two others of its species, a zebra and an onager. And strangely, in addition to the animals, "a splendid collection of paintings and engravings," a forerunner of the museum or side show. All of this could be seen for 25 cents, children half price.

Newark was devoid of traveling shows in 1835 until November 9-10, when Raymond, Odgen, Waring and Macomber, Welch & Co. combined for a one day stand.

In 1836, the succinctly titled Mammoth Exhibition came to town under the management of Noell E. Waring with animals from the Zoological Institute of New York.

It exhibited on a new and presumably larger lot on April 29. We also have the first suggestion of a parade, as it was stated that the arrival of the Grand Cavalcade would be announced by the National Band of Music of twelve musicians. This cavalcade was drawn by 100 horses, the largest yet to come to Newark, and employed 65 men. This was sizeable operation for those days.

The collection of animals was much larger and had more variety than anything Newark had seen. It advertised a hippopotamus (not actually on the show), a rhinoceros, a polar bear, a brown bear, a zebu, water buffalo, a pair of kangaroos, a wolf, an elephant, two camels, a zebra, a quagga, a gnu, a hyena and a jackal. There were six animals, a mixture of li-

ons, tigers and leopards in the cage with Issac Van Amburgh. We can only speculate on the size of this wagon, but it must have been a large one. It was perhaps 6 or 7 feet wide by 15 to 20 feet long and perhaps 7 feet high. It had to be sizeable for he entered it with Master Hayman, a 9 year old boy, and a lamb. Van Amburgh performed a series of simple tricks including putting his head in the lion's mouth. And of course the boy and the lamb laid down with the animals. The animal were exhibited from 1 to 4 P. M. and Van Amburgh put on his show at 3 P. M. Before his act there was a performance by a pony and a monkey. Then the animals were fed. During all of this activity the band played, so we can see that along with the menagerie, elements of the circus were being incorporated. After Newark, the show moved to Elizabeth, New Brunswick and Princeton.

Eighteen thirty seven brought more changes, with an increasing part being played by circus type animal acts. Previously most animals had been displayed in menageries. When Purdy, Welch, Macomber & Co's New York Zoological Institute visited Newark on April 27 and 28 little mention was made of the animals. Rather, the emphasis was upon two other aspects. The parade into town was led by the band mounted on 12 horses with two more bandsmen in a howdah on an elephant. This was followed by the cages and baggage wagons. The other aspect featured was Van Amburgh's performance with his animals. Besides the child and lamb laying with the animals, he managed to combine the animals into the most astonishing and terrific groups. This was quite a feat within limits of the relatively small area of the cage. The act sounds surprisingly like its modern counterparts. During the exhibition "a variety of interesting entertainments will take place with ponies, monkeys, elephants, etc." The circus was taking on more and more the appearance of a present day trained animal circus. But most significantly at the bottom of the newspaper ad the following appeared: "Also in the evening the National Gymnasium and American Arena or Circus Company, will appear near the menagerie. Admittance to the boxes 50 cents, pit 25 cents." This



Two Magnificent Collections of rare Beasts and Birds from Europe, Asia, Africa, and North and South America, embracing the most valuable and extensive variety of Animals ever offered to the American public. The Exhibition is accompanied by the celebrated Russian Circus, which will announce the arrival of the Grand Cavalry; and the whole will be arranged in a splendid Pavilion, prepared expressly for the accommodation of 6,000 visitors at one time. Seats will be provided for Ladies and Children. The living specimens of Natural History contained in this menagerie of Menageries, in part consist of the following, viz: the Unicorn, or one horned Rhinoceros; Polar or White Bear; Eland, from Central Africa; Black Ostrich; Kangaroo; Gnu, or Horned Horse; Hindoo, or Great Stag; Bear; Grizzly Bears from the Rocky Mountains; Pelicans, Vultures, Hyenas, Zebras, Lamas, Camels, Dromedaries, Elephants, Buffalo, Leopards, Tigers, Lions, and numerous other rare and interesting Animals, which will be exhibited at

Syracuse, on a lot adjoining the south side of Salinas, (for two days only) on Thursday and Friday the 15th and 16th inst.

Hours of admission—Thursday 1 to 4 P. M.—Friday 10 to 12 A. M., 1 to 4 P. M. See large bills posted up in the principal hotels.

ADMITTANCE ONLY 25 CENTS—CHILDREN UNDER 10 YEARS OF AGE HALF PRICE.



THE BOSTON BRASS BAND, EDWARD KENDALL, LEADER.

The foregoing Cut represents the manner in which the fifteen Musicians precede the Caravan, and take the lead on entering into places of exhibition. They are mounted on trained horses, and part of them occupy seats in the Howdah on the Elephant's back. The Band is furnished with a great variety of popular Music, from the most eminent composers, consisting of Overtures, Polkas, Caricatures, Marches, Waltzes, Quick Steps, and a choice selection of Sacred Music, from approved authors, all of which is expressly arranged and dedicated to E. Kendall's Brass Band, the musical talent of which is not surpassed in any country. These performances alone are worth more than double the price of admission, and afford the highest gratification.

"The Lion and the Lamb shall lie down together, and a little Child shall lead them."



MR. VAN AMBURGH WILL ENTER THE CAGES AT 2: P. M.

This ad from a Syracuse, New York paper is the same as one used for the 1837 Newark date. Pfening Archives.

latter item is interesting for several reasons. Since it is part of the ad for the menagerie, albeit a small one, it must be assumed that the two organizations were affiliated with one another. In the early and mid 19th century while the churches considered menageries educational, and therefore acceptable, the circus, which was only an entertainment, was often considered sinful.

Also, the circus was stated as only being "near" the menagerie rather than on the same location suggests a desire on the part of the menagerie owners to disassociate themselves somewhat from the circus. But they were only too happy to accept its profits. It is also interesting that two attractions were separated in exhibition hours. The menagerie was open in the afternoon from 1 to 4 while the circus showed in the evening. The circus was

Tufts' American Arena Co. at this date only.

Was all of this too much of a good thing for the approximately 20,000 good citizens of Newark? The year 1838 found this rapidly growing city again with no traveling menageries or circuses. In 1839, however, June, Titus, Angevine & Co. brought their "splendid collection of LIVING Animals" to Newark on May 6 and 7. This show featured a giraffe, the first to be shown in the United States. Two thirds of the newspaper ad was devoted to a picture and description of the animal. Other animals enumerated were "the unicorn or one-horned rhinoceros," two Indian elephants (the first show to visit Newark with more than one), zebra, striped and spotted hyenas, lion, eland, gnu, llama, kangaroos, lioness, royal Bengal tigers, jaguars, panthers, leopards, polar bear, cinnamon bear and polar bear. A band played during the hours of exhibition, 1 to 4 P. M. Also exhibited were a collection of Cosmorama views and six "enormous" anacondas. Admission to see all of this was the cheapest yet, 12 1/2 cents.

The first circus to appear in Newark was that of Welch, Bartlett & Co. John Glenroy's autobiography tells us that it was in the city in November 1839.

In 1840 Newark had its second circus, the Victory Arena and Great Western Circus showing for two days, May 20-21. Little is known about this organization except that S. H. Nichols was the proprietor. He advertised a superb stud of horses and company of equestrians. The performance consisted of acts involving horses, both ridden and trick, with the emphasis on the former. The only part of the show that was in any way described in the ads was the entry into town, or as it later became, the parade, which featured the Boston Band and "a train of new and elegant carriages and mounted horses, with the most superb trappings, each them wearing a chime of bells, which when in motion, add still more to the thrilling and animating sound of the Music."

On June 4-5, 1841 Newark was visited by the first menagerie and circus in one organization, under one management and announced and advertised as such. This extensive organization, one of the largest of its day, was under the management of

JUNE, TITUS, ANGEVINE & CO., will exhibit their Splendid Collection of **LIVING ANIMALS**, at Newark, 6th and 7th May, on the Lot near the Methodist Church, Halsey street. Among the Collection will be found the following rare specimens.



THE EGYPTIAN GIRAFFE, OR CAME-LEOPARD—This Majestic and beautiful animal, acknowledged to be one of the greatest wonders of the animal kingdom; when full grown, it is from 18 to 20 feet in height. It was known to the Persians about two thousand years ago—after which, we hear no more of it till the time of Julius Caesar, from that period, until within a few years, its existence had been deemed fabulous. The one now offered for inspection was brought from the vicinity of the White River, the remotest branch of the Nile, a part of the world which has never been visited by a white man, and was transported to the Mediterranean, a distance of nearly 3,000 miles, and shipped to the United States in 1838, by Geo. R. Gliddon, Esq., American Consul at Cairo.

June, Titus, Angevine ad for the Newark May 6-7, 1839 stand. Author's collection.

June, Titus, Angevine & Co. It had an extensive menagerie which featured an elephant and a giraffe, said to be sixteen feet high. In addition there was a "black tiger, eland, Brazilian tiger (or jaguar), a pair of kangaroos, African gazelles, black bear, badgers from the Rocky Mountains, cinnamon bear, boa constrictors and anaconda serpents, together with a variety of monkeys, birds, etc., etc."

The performance in the arena started with "a waltz and gallopade by eight horses followed by an elegant equitation by the Juvenile Roscius, Master Stevens—the Polish Brothers who will enact many new feats and Corpuscular maneuvers by the entire company. Still vaulting by the whole company—Negro extravaganza by McCabe and pupil—Master Franklin will perform some rapid feats of light riding—Mr. Sweet the graceful and intrepid horseman will appear on 2 horses—Slack rope by Master Rockwell—Mr. Rockwell will then appear in his strictly classical act of horsemanship entitled the Genius of Roscius or The Flight of Mercury. In this

beautiful pantomimic equestrian scene the intrepid and graceful rider will exhibit a variety of changes during the rapid flight of his charger; appearing first as the aged Matron with her grandson upon her shoulders, secondly changing to the Grecian Warrior in full armor, then to the gladiator of admirable proportions, and again to the Winged Messenger of Olympus—the whole to conclude with a laughable afterpiece." This is an edited version of the entire advertised program, some ten acts. Mr. Rockwell was apparently the star of the show for fully a third of the publicity was devoted to a detailed description of his act. In addition to the menagerie and circus performance it also advertised a collection of cosmoranic views, large painting on rollers. And of course, there was a "first rate band of music" to accompany the exhibitions. Boxes were 50¢ with children half price and the pit, standing room, was 25¢. Doors opened at 2 and 7 with the show starting a half hour later—not much time to view the menagerie and get seated.

In 1842 and 1843 Newark saw no traveling shows. However in 1844 Raymond & Co.'s Great Zoological Exhibition from Philadelphia appeared. Its ad stated that it would be in Newark May 9 "and probably remain the 10th also." This indefinite dating was not uncommon. In the mid-west the roads and travel conditions were often most uncertain. This is the only example of this kind of advertising that has been found for Newark. The advertising proclaimed that when entering town a "Great Four Elephant Team will head the Cavalcade drawing a Band of Music followed by some thirty wagons and Sixty Fancy Colored Horses." Jacob Driesbach with his lions and tigers was the only other feature advertised, the ads being fairly long on praise but short on specifics.

In 1845 the Philadelphia Institute again had its menagerie on tour, calling it the "Immense Menagerie." On its way to New York City the show visited Newark on May 7 for an afternoon only show. For reasons not now known, most menageries often played only in the afternoon. Probably difficulty in lighting the interior of the cages with the lights then available was the reason. Instead of the usual descriptive newspaper ad the show published an article from the Harrisburg Signal. It said in part: "The exhibition paid our borough a visit preceded by four immense elephants harnessed to the carriage which contained a splendid band of musicians and composing a range of wagons and horses which for an animal show beats all former processions all hollow. Now we have read of 'David in the Lion's den' and the old Serpent who played the Devil among the cauliflowers in the Garden of Eden were half a match to Herr



VICTORY ARENA.

AND GREAT WESTERN CIRCUS.

Will be Exhibited in Montrose, for one day only, on Tuesday, the 4th day of August next, 1840.

MR. S. H. NICHOLS, Proprietor of this establishment, offers his unparalleled list of attractions to the public, with an assurance that the strictest scrutiny is paid to characterize the selection of amusements he will produce with his extensive and beautiful stud of horses, and very numerous company of eminent and popular equestrian artists, including such a combination of talent as has never on any former occasion been presented to an American Audience.

The entertainments he will bring forward are marked by a variety of novelties, and splendour of activity, unsurpassed in this country. The whole interior arrangements are fitted up and embellished in such a degree of style and convenience as to render it the most magnificent and genteel place of amusement. To enhance still more the above unparalleled entertainment the proprietor has engaged the celebrated

This ad for the Victory Arena and Great Western Circus is the same as one used for the 1840 Newark stand. Pfening Archives.

Driesbach in the management of the beasts of the forest. He handles the enormous Numidian lioness as though she was an indebted relative, and after magnetizing a leopard enfolds himself in the arms of Old Morpheus and by instinctive snoring compels a tiger to dance a hornpipe. It was a truly magnificent exhibition."

Welch & Mann's Mammoth National Circus, which came next, advertised: "Not less than 100 men and horses." The show was in Newark on June 2 and 3, giving performances in the evening at 7 and an afternoon performance only on June 3. Admission was only 25 cents. No description of the performance was given.

The year 1846 was a ground breaker in Newark. For the first time it had three shows in one season. By now the population had grown to over 35,000 and the city was a prospering manufacturing town able to provide good business to this many shows. The first to arrive was Howes & Co's New York Mammoth Circus on May 4-6. This was the first show to play a three day stand in Newark. The newspaper ads were also unusually long and detailed, giving descriptions of all the acts. The ad was more than a column in

length and more than a third of it was devoted to the star, Madame Macarte. Also headlined as a clown was none other than Dan Rice in his sixth season of performing.

The program opened at the matinee with a spec called "The Amazons and the Warriors" with 20 horses and riders in gold and silver costumes. In the evening "The Tournament" presented knights, templars, lords and ladies in costly wardrobe. The opening was followed by nine year old Master Nixon in feats of equestrianism, tumbling by the whole company, and feats of strength by the Scotch giant and giantess, Mr. and Mrs. Randall. Next came Mr. Macarte doing tumbling, Mrs. Cole and Miss Aymar in high school riding, and an act of contortion by William Cole. Mr. Randall came back to perform feats of strength while riding two horses. Mr. Sweet then presented a liberty horse act, followed by more gymnastics and posturing by J. Nixon and his son. Mr. Howes then made some five costume changes while riding bareback. This was the standard flying wardrobe act which was popular for at least 100 more years. Poodles Hanneford was the most recent exponent of the act. Next came two trained dogs presented by Mr. Cole; a depiction of Indian riding by Mr. Sweet assisted by Dan Rice and his three dogs doing a "coon hunt," and the Swiss brothers in classic poses, a fore runner of sorts of the statue acts of later years. After this, as the program neared its end, came Madame Macarte in her much publicized pad riding act. Mr. Hobbs followed with somersaults and other daring tricks on horseback. It is puzzling, at this late date, to understand why Madame Macarte got more attention than did Mr. Hobbs who did tricks that would appear to have been much more difficult. The show concluded with a slack rope act by C. Howes. The after show of Negro minstrels, featuring Dan Emmet, banjoist, a harmonium band and a pantomime of Jack and the Beanstalk. These reports suggest this show had more variety than most of the others of that era. It must have made a very favorable impression on the people of Newark. Yet as varied and full as the program was, there appears to have been only about twenty performers. There was a band of five, and perhaps about thirty to forty grooms, drivers, canvasmen, many of whom doubled. It is estimated that about 70 persons were enough to carry on the business. This is not very many by later standards and yet this show was one of the leaders of its day.

Newark did not have its second show, Welch & Mann's Mammoth National Circus, until September 16-17. There was an afternoon show on the 16th "for the accommodation of families." Admission

was 25 cents with no half price. The entrance into town was led by a "most magnificent band chariot drawn by 12 splendid cream colored horses with thirteen talented musicians followed by a grand retinue of carriages, teams, etc., numbering in all over 150 men and horses." There were some 25 performers listed, among whom were Mrs. E. Aymar, beautiful pastoral rider; the Rivers family of



**WELCH & MANN'S
MAMMOTH NATIONAL CIRCUS,
NOT LESS THAN 100 MEN AND HORSES.**
Consisting of the greatest Equestrian and Gymnastic talent ever combined in the United States—a great number of performers having lately arrived from the principal amphitheatres in Europe.
The proprietors of this magnificent establishment can assure the public that neither price nor expense has been spared to make this one of the most respectable in the country.
For particulars see large and small bills posted at the principal Hotels.

**Will be Exhibited in Newark
On Monday & Tuesday, June 2d and 3d,
1 FOR TWO DAYS ONLY**
Doors open at 7 1/2 o'clock. Performance to commence at 8 o'clock P. M.
Admission 25 Cents only. **50**
N. B.—For the accommodation of those who do not wish to attend in the evening, there will be an afternoon performance on Tuesday, commencing at half past 2 o'clock. Doors open at 2 o'clock.
WELCH & MANN, Proprietors
N. J.

This Welch & Mann ad appeared in the Newark *Daily Advertiser*. Author's collection.

three; and John Glenroy, a noted rider of his day. Unlike the Howes ad no program was listed.

This show was followed on October 27 by Raymond & Waring's Immense Menagerie which gave exhibitions both afternoon and evening. There was an interesting aspect to its ads. Only about a third was devoted to date, place and descriptions while two thirds was devoted to biblical references. The public was told its "entrance into town will be preceded by a gorgeous Roman chariot, drawn by elephants, literally covered with gold, superior to Van Amburgh's, or anything ever constructed both in carving and gilding. Length of chariot 30 feet, height to summit of canopy 20 feet; weight 8,000 pounds." While we can accept that this was a large vehicle for its time, the dimensions were undoubtedly exaggerated. Mr. Pierce was the wild animal trainer who entered the dens of lions, tigers, grizzly bears, etc. It was also stated they had acquired a "monster white bear from the Royal Gardens, Paris." No other mention

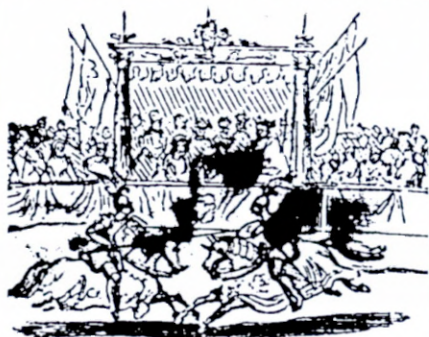
of the contents of the menagerie was made.

The season of 1847 again brought three outdoor shows to Newark. This thriving industrial town, now nearing 40,000 population, was proving to be a lucrative spot for showmen to visit. The first was Raymond & Waring's on April 24. Their menagerie was probably the largest on the road.

Their arrival in town was scheduled for about 10 A. M. The "imposing train or procession was led by a gorgeous Roman Chariot literally covered with gold. The splendor and magnificence of the gorgeous carriage baffles description." It was stated that it cost \$5,000 to build, a very large sum in those days. According to a report it was 20 feet long and 20 feet high to the top of the canopy, a somewhat more reliable sounding description than some of the others. Based on the art in the newspapers, this wagon was to be pulled by a two elephant team; however, they had drowned in the Delaware River on their way to opening day in Camden, New Jersey. Apparently some of the performers rode in it, dressed in appropriate costumes. This vehicle was followed by an elaborate carry-all type of wagon drawn by eight horses in which the band rode. Then, according to the ad, came "thirty carriages containing the various animals in this immense exhibition drawn by one hundred horses." This suggests that only about a third of the cages were small and light enough to require only two horses while as many as twenty others probably needed four horses each. This does not account for any baggage wagons, which probably arrived earlier. The baggage train consisted of no more than half a dozen wagons. The show carried no side shows, cookhouse, dressing top, wardrobe nor horse tops. There was only the main tent in which the animals were exhibited, together with a few seats "for the ladies." The horses and staff were all housed at local stables and hostleries so there was no need for any auxiliary tents.

The exhibition of the menagerie was augmented by the "performance of Mr. Pierce, The great Napoleon of the age, with lions, tigers and leopards. This great artist would fondle and render himself, apparently, as one of these animals in their own den. After this he assumes command, orders each to their respective departments, and finally signalizes himself by driving an African lion in harness." This driving was done in the open ring. All of this was supplemented by animals which were the "choicest and most perfect specimens ever exhibited. The majority of them have been imported during the last two years—the largest collection ever presented to the public." The show was open

HOWES & CO'S. GREAT UNITED STATES CIRCUS.



embracing a **TREBLE COMPANY**, and by far the largest establishment ever organized: consisting of **Two Hundred Men and Horses**, Requiring **THIRTY** carriages to convey the Performers, Musicians, Wardrobes, &c.,

Will exhibit at Schuylkill Haven, on Thursday, the 13th; Minersville, Friday, the 14th; Pottsville, Saturday and Monday, the 15th and 17th; and Tamaqua, Tuesday, the 18th day of May next: performance commencing at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and 7 in the evening, admittance to box 25 cents.

The Howes show used this ad a few weeks after playing Newark in 1847. Pfening Archives.

from 1 to 4 P. M. for 25 cents with children under 10 years for 12 1/2 cents.

Two days later, on April 26, Howes & Co's Great United States Circus arrived for a three day stand. The admission was 25 cents and half price for children under 10.

Part of the ad read: "to prevent crowds at the doors there will be two entrances to the Pavilion [big top]. Gentlemen accompanied by ladies will enter at the north door; persons with out ladies at the south. The Pavilion is the largest ever used in the United States and capable of seating one third more spectators than the one used by the same establishment last year." While there is no data on the size of

the tent we can guess that it was probably a one center pole round top about 150 feet in diameter, since it was advertised to be a third larger than the previous year.

Something else new was the illumination of the performance by "locomotive gas--flowing from one hundred and fifty burners." According to the ad no other circus had this improvement.

The show arrived in town in a cavalcade of "two hundred men and horses requiring thirty carriages to convey the performers, musicians, wardrobe, etc." The entry was led by a Golden Chariot drawn by 20 cream colored horses driven by Mark Johnson. Also in the parade was a miniature chariot drawn by ponies only 36 inches high. The vehicle carried La Petite George, a pupil of Mr. Nixon, the equestrian director.

The program began with "Harlequin's Frolics or Mistakes of the night." This was performed only at the evening performance. The ads suggest the program was almost entirely horse acts. The performers listed were all men, not uncommon for shows of that period. All were riders, except two clowns, W. H. Kemp, the principal clown, and his assistant, R. Williams. W. O. Dale from England was the principal rider and vaulter, and was credited with having completed 73 somersets without a pause. Another rider, T. McFarland, competed with Dale in vaulting. One other rider whose specialty, besides vaulting, was riding two horses was mentioned. Nixon's pupils, William and George, also performed as riders. Lastly, G. W. Sergeant did the standard "Shakespearean" costume changing act while riding. No mention was made of any trained animals, dogs, horses, nor acrobats, either ground or aerial. It is hard to believe there were none. There was an after show, "an inimitable burlesque of the Negro minstrels by Messrs Plave, Brown, Mestayer and Jones who will introduce a variety of melodies, airs and refrains peculiar to the minstrels of the South." Undoubtedly they also did some dancing. Early the next morning the troupe left for Rahway, a three or four hour haul of about 12 miles where they gave only an evening show on April 29.

It was exactly six months before Newark again saw a circus. Sands, Lent & Co's American Circus came to town for three days October 25-27. Unlike Howes, it gave two shows each day at 2:30 and 7 P. M. The ads provided a rather complete description of the show. The company was proud of its stars of the arena, gymnasium, menage and their stable of horses. The English horse May Fly danced in time to music. The ponies, Damon and Pythias, performed all sorts of exercises. Tom Spring and Deaf Burke, were two beautifully trained horses. Cinderella, a



SANDS, LENT & CO'S

HIPPOFERAEAN ARENA.

THIS IMMENSE AND TRULY MAGNIFICENT Establishment will be open in

Harrisburg, on Monday and Tuesday, September 18th and 19th, 1848.

FOR TWO DAYS ONLY.

In addition to their already mammoth troupe of Equestrians and Animals, the Proprietors offer, the present season, a series of Novel and Magnificent Entertainments, far surpassing anything that ever presented to the American Public. The leading new features of this extensive Company consists of a pair of trained Elephants, Jenny Lind and Romeo, and ten Egyptian Camels, whose performances have been the wonder and delight of thousands in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe. Independent of these unparalleled novelties, the company proper is composed of a host of artists whose abilities have stood the test of the most searching criticism both in the old and new worlds, and the names which are now offered are a sufficient guaranty that none but the most talented have been selected.

Sands Lent & Co. ad used in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Democrat Union in 1848. Pfening Archives.

diminutive fairy steed, performed gracefully. Also listed was an Arabian thoroughbred polka horse, obtained at great cost from Franconis of Paris. Finally, there was a liberty act of 12 ponies, perhaps one of the earliest such acts.

The performers were led by Richard Sands, a leading equestrian of the time, and his two children in acts of gymnastics and posing. Two children were also leading horseback acrobats, Master Hernandez and Walter Aymar. Mr. Moseley was a leading scenic rider who performed his original character of the Pickwick Family, another of the costume changing acts so popular in those days. Mr. Rugles performed on the slack wire. Two highly thought of clowns of the period, Joe Pentland and Sam Lathrop, filled out the bill. It appears to have been a well rounded program. Again the standard admission was 25 cents but no half price for children.

Howes and Co's Great United States Circus, "the largest troupe ever organized," spent the winter of 1847-1848 in

Newark. The show had "240 men and horses, and 12 trained Shetland ponies, requiring 40 carriages" to carry all the personnel, tents and baggage. Howes was now much enlarged for 1848, if we can trust the ads. In 1847 the show had only 200 men and horses and 30 carriages were needed to move the show. In 1848 it advertised three splendid chariots, one more than the previous year. Howes still had the Golden Chariot, 22 feet long and 18 feet high, drawn by 20 cream colored horses which carried the New York brass band led by Peter Voorst. The two other parade vehicles were mentioned. One was the Winged Dragon of Old England. It was described thusly: "the body represents the monster with extended wings and the tail coiled up in attitude of defiance." The other was the Fairy Chariot drawn by 12 Shetland ponies which had also been on the show in 1846.

The performance which was given afternoon and evening on both days, at 3 and 7:30 P.M., was almost identical with the one in 1846. Again much was made of the gas lights. The feature was eight Arabs in ground tumbling, flying leaps, double somersets, and firing muskets. At the same time they leaped over horses, making the formation of pyramids of human figures. So far as is known, this was the second troupe of Arab acrobats to perform in the United States. There were also five women performing various feats of equestrianism. Three Shetland ponies, Rough and Ready, Black Hawk, and Bosphorus, gave "a splendid performance." W. H. Kemp did "walking on crutches [stilts?] nine feet high," and also did his pantomime of "Harlequin's frolic or Mistakes of a Night." Nixon and his two sons performed a variety of gymnastics and posturing.

The summer and much of the fall passed before Newark again was visited by a circus. It was Sands, Lent & Co's Hippoferean Arena on October 24. This show, a big one for its day, was possibly the equal of Howes. It certainly was more of a circus in the modern sense. There were two performing elephants, Jenny Lind and Romeo, ten performing camels as well as performing ponies. The list of performers was varied: Richard Sands and his two sons, Maurie and Jesse in riding; Mons. Cane in acrobatics; young Walter Aymar in bareback riding; seven year old Rosaline Madigan, riding; Sig. Perez, contortionist; Mr. Madigan in scenic riding; and Mr. Ruggles on the tight rope. There was also several others in various acts.

The parade or entry into town scheduled for 11 A. M. was also eye worthy. It was led by the sacred Egyptian Dragon Chariot drawn by ten camels carrying a full band. Next came the East India Car,

HOWES & CO'S



UNITED STATES CIRCUS!

THIS IMMENSE ESTABLISHMENT, THE largest and most complete ever organized, comprising the best Equestrian and Gymnastic Troupe ever collected, with a Stud of HORSES and PONIES superior to any other in the country, will exhibit in **UTICA, TUESDAY and WEDNESDAY, JULY 3d and 4th.**

The U. S. Circus in its progress through the country will be preceded by the great triumphal **GOLDEN CHARIOT!**

Drawn by 20 Cream Colored Horses, and devoted to the conveyance of a celebrated **NEW YORK BRASS BAND.** The magnitude and splendor of this immense vehicle baffles description. It is the **ONLY ONE** of modern times which approaches the colossal achievements of art described in ancient history. Its weight exceeds **FIVE TONS**, and its elaborate carving and gilding surpasses anything of the kind ever witnessed. The famous

JOHN MAY!

acknowledged universally as the best **CLOWN** in the World, is a member of this Company. Also

MR. RICHARD RIVERS!

The best Principal Rider living; together with Mr. B. R. RUNNELS, the Herculean 2 and 4 Horse rider; **CHANG WON FANG**, the wonderful Chinese Bottle Performer; Mr. G. W. **SERGEANT**, the great Dramatic Equestrian; Mons. **HUBBELL**, the celebrated Cannon Ball performer; Mr. **COLE**, the unrivalled Contortionist; Miss **JOHNSON**, and Madames **COLE** and **JOHNSON**, Female Equestrians of celebrity; Mr. R. W. **SMITH**, the prince of comic singers; Messrs. **NAGLES**, **BLISS**, **KENNEDY**, **TATNALL**, **JOHNSON** and **MILLER**, first class Gymnasts, and others of acknowledged talent in their various departments.

Doors open on **TUESDAY, July 3d**, at 7½ P. M. On **WEDNESDAY, JULY 4th**, there will be Three performances. Doors open at 10 A. M., 2 and 7½ P. M.

Admission 25 cents. Children under 9 years half price.

Howes & Co's ad used in Utica, New York in June of 1849. Pfening Archives.

drawn by two elephants, followed by the large stud of horses and "all of the numerous and costly and highly decorated vehicles belonging to the company." No mention was made of the number so it is not known if they had as many as Howes. The beautiful Fairy Carriage, drawn by 20 Lilliputian Ponies, ended the cavalcade. It is interesting and unusual that this show had both a string band led by Herr Gerloff and a brass band led by George Gealey. Musical director E. K. Eaton presumably handled both.

The 1848 outdoor season ended for Newark with a visit on November 11 by Van Amburgh & Co's Menagerie. It exhibited from 2 to 4 in the afternoon and at an early evening show from 6 to 8. It

came after visits in New Brunswick on November 9, and Rahway on the 10th. It was scheduled to enter town at 11 A.M. led by "the Colossal Tuba Rheda or Grecian State Carriage painted and gilded in the most gorgeous style containing Post's Famous New York brass band." The carriages and cages, pulled by 100 dapple gray horses, had all been newly built in New York City that year. They were highly painted and decorated, but by the end of a long season were undoubtedly not as bright as at the beginning. The exhibition took place in a "spacious pavilion." A Miss Calhoun and Mr. Brooks gave exhibitions of the "ascendancy of intellect over the wild tenants of the forest."

In 1849 only two shows visiting Newark. One of them made a return visit. Howes & Co's United States Circus appeared April 9-10 and again August 11. Business was good in 1849, but Howes used very small ads compared to previous years. Only about three inch columns were used for both dates. The Golden Chariot, pulled by 20 cream colored horses, was still leading the entourage into town. The Fairy Equipage pulled by ponies was still part of the show. The performers were headed by clown John May, and Richard Rivers was the leading principal rider. Others in the show were B. R. Runnels, two and four horse rider; Chang Won Fang, Chinese bottle juggler; G. W. Sergeant, dramatic equestrian; Mons. Hubbell, cannon ball juggler; Mr. Cole, contortionist; Miss Johnson, Mrs. Cole and Mrs. Johnson, equestriennes; R. W. Smith, comic singer; and the Messrs. Nagles, Bliss, Kennedy, Tatnell, Johnson and Miller, gymnasts. Frank Whitaker was the ringmaster. In the first visit to Newark Major Little Finger, the smallest human being, was featured, but by August, he had apparently left the show for he was not mentioned in the ads.

On November 2, Van Amburgh & Co's Menagerie arrived late in the year as it had done in 1848 on their way to wind up their tour in New York City. Again the "Tuba Rheda" led the way into town, this year carrying Col. Cobb's military band. Among the animals mentioned were a polar bear, sacred Ox Nandi, and a lioness with her cubs. This show was perhaps more of an animal circus than any yet for the ads specially mention performances in the "circle," the era's jargon for the ring. Van Amburgh had a trained black tiger or panther, a royal Bengal tiger, and a Himalayan cougar. Mr. Langworthy presented the trained elephant Bolivar as well as two highly trained ponies. Performances were given from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8 in the large pavilion for 25 cents with children under 9 half price. And so the first thirty years of circus and menagerie visits to Newark came to an end.

This paper was presented in somewhat different form at the 1991 Circus Historical Society convention in Charleston, South Carolina.

Circus day in small American towns in the nineteenth century usually meant that there was an influx of people from the surrounding countryside. They came by horse and wagon or on horseback, and they spent the day. Their rigs lined the streets and access roads. "A thousand teams in town," a newspaper reported on circus day. They arrived early enough to watch the parade, eat some food, and attend the show. It was a festive occasion for farmers; a time in which they could talk to neighbors whom they saw only occasionally, have a horse shod, visit the saloon. Their wives would chat with friends, and buy some necessities. The children could run about in places they seldom visited, and play with others their own age.

These invasions of the town, along with the fair and the Fourth of July and election days and militia drills, were a boon to local merchants. "All the stores ran out of crackers and bologna," was a comment on one such occasion. There were no restaurants, of course, though meals could be purchased at taverns or inns. Many people brought food from home and "pick-nicked" either before or after the performance. Because of the presence of this multitude, itinerant vendors set up stands to sell food or drink, and even to entertain the public. It is these hangers-on which are the subject of this paper.

Today, we use the word "sideshow" to denote an annex to the circus as presented under the big top. "Sideshow" is a contraction of the original term, which was "out-side shows." The two terms mean the same thing. The earliest reference we have to any business on the lot other than the circus performance is to whiskey stands, and these date from the late eighteenth century. Since the circus and the whiskey stands appear at the same time we are under the impression that whiskey stands pre-date the circus. We mentioned fairs, militia musters and other occasions for crowds. Apparently, whiskey stands were a long-standing tradition by the time the circus began. All the vendor needed was two saw-

THE OUT-SIDE SHOWS

By Stuart Thayer

horses, a board, a cup and a bottle or two.

On circus lots the consumption of liquor led to arguments and fights and riots. The phrase "fueled by liquor," was a common newspaper comment in reports of violence. We must remember that every neer-do-well and loafer in the community would be present on circus day, just as they would at any public gathering. If there was no drunkenness or fighting it was unusual enough for editors to remark it. When the Number One unit of the Zoological Institute visited Dedham, Massachusetts in July of 1835 the local paper said "No spirits or wines were sold on the grounds, and of course all was sobriety and good order."¹

The other side of the coin is represented by a Jamestown, New York newspaper on the occasion of the Joe Pentland Circus' visit in June, 1855: "An unusual amount of drunkenness . . . the liquor was doubtless mostly furnished by the peddlers who follow the circus."²

Food and drink vendors, trinket sellers and operators of games of chance all vied for the public's money. In time, they became so numerous on the grounds that they inspired comment. The Purdy, Welch & Co. Menagerie played Newport, New Hampshire in August, 1833, and when they left the local editor wrote, "At-

tached to this caravan, or at all events accompanying it, are a set of money-catchers who sell tinware, jewelry, ready-made clothing and notions at auction. A dice board was on the lot for the amusement and entertainment of the patrons of vice."³

Auctions were a common way of selling clothing and household goods in the days before retail stores pre-priced their wares. Much of the wholesale business in the country was conducted by auction, as were the sale of commodities in bulk,

such as wheat, corn and tobacco. Allen and Lewis Sells of circus fame operated an auction wagon in their early years, visiting fairs and festivals and circus grounds. In an interesting aside to that, the *Billboard* once noted that the brothers were not allowed on the lot of the Gardner & Hemmings Circus until they paid a privilege fee.⁴

A Jackson, Michigan reporter wrote in July, 1851, "Pop-beer, soda, lemonade and gingerbread met with a ready market and many a street dealer came near to making his fortune."⁵ Other comments we have found include one from Youngstown, Ohio in 1856, "We did not count the side shows, but as usual there were a number in the wake of the big show." He went on to describe what we now call a ten-in-one, and then said that there were the usual gingerbread, pop and candy stands, as well as the ubiquitous auctioneers.⁶

Gingerbread, by the way, was popular with street vendors because it had what, in modern terms, is called a long shelf-life. It could be carried from town to town for several days and one only needed to wipe the dust from it to make it presentable on the next lot.

The Nixon & Kemp Circus of 1857 provided the impetus for two descriptions of the outside shows. The first is in a letter

in the Michigan Historical Collections in which a student at the University describes the lot scene for his brother. He writes, "Arrived at the ground we found that there was not only the one great circus, but that there was any quantity of little side shows, lotteries, etc., to pick away the change from one's pocket. One man was yelling that he had in his tent a live skeleton, another that he had a great band of negro minstrels, another that



he had some of the most curious animals in the world. Another had a lifting machine to show how much one could lift, another an arrow balanced on a pivot over a board and over the board was placed some brass rings, breastpins, watches, etc., so that one could turn around this arrow or give it a whirl and whatever it stopped over they could have; another had a man's face pictured on a board and set up and if anyone could hit it on the nose he would give him a circus ticket or a quarter of a dollar, the one that shot was to use a rifle which was loaded with a dart. I looked at them all wondering at the many ways men have to make money and pitying these poor ones who had become so low as to resort to this miserable method of gaining a livelihood. I noticed that they were all, without exception, poor drunken wretches.⁷

The second description is from the Bloomington, Illinois *Pantagraph* and says that in addition to the circus there was a man who played twelve drums at once, a fat girl, a living skeleton, a man with several bells on his head and a crank-operated fiddle in his hands, a machine that tested one's strength, a wheel that designated what prize a person had won (the prize worth about three cents and played for a dime, according to the reporter), a revolving grab bag (more profitable to the owner than to anyone else) and a razor sharpener.⁸

In 1858 the Dan Rice Circus made a stand in Bucyrus, Ohio and a visit by a local newsman brought forth this description: "There were a half-dozen supplementary tents, containing most attractive, instructive and elevating exhibitions. One contained a French giant, with a Prussian name and an English face, whose portrait outside occupied a full twelve feet of canvas. Another hid from public sight the 'Skeleton Man,' whose merits and perfections were not only depicted upon canvas, but were noisily heralded to an admiring crowd by a round, brandy-faced Johnny Bull. . . ."

"There were divers and sundry other exhibitions but these may be taken as specimen bricks. All supported an orator, and around the entrances to all a strong odor of whisky might be detected."⁹

We can see that these descriptions are very similar, and that the writers felt that the maze of outside shows needed to be described.

The most complete report we've thus

far discovered is in the Janesville, Wisconsin *Democratic Standard* of May 31, 1854, the week following the stand of Franconi's Hippodrome. The editor remarked that the score or more of side shows began setting up early in the morning. First came the wax works show. Two wagons drove up and were joined together to make a respectable, meaning sizable, room with a canvas roof. They had excellent music, but the wax figures left something to be desired. Then came Ethiopian singers, with a white

man painted black, riding around on a mule to draw a crowd. At every point there was a tent with a show in it. They charged from five to fifty cents, and they were well attended. Intermixed with the tents were the booths of the razor strop men, the soap men, the lemonade and cake men, while two singing girls with organ and tamborine wandered among the crowds playing and picking up coppers. The living skeleton had his admirers, so did the sea lion, and the wild boy of the woods, and each seemed to do a good business until the Hippodrome opened, when the others closed their shows to let the big show have a full swing.

There was obviously some control over the outside shows by the Franconi management. Perhaps they sub-let space on their lot, or simply made an agreement with the small operators to close when the big show began. As we noted, Hemmings & Cooper demanded a privilege fee of the Sells brothers; we would date that 1868, at the earliest. We have found no documentation of any agreements concerning out-side shows.

To illustrate how pervasive these side-shows were in the order of things social, we will illustrate with one more description, but not from a circus lot. The annual militia musters that every community was required to support consisted of the local part-time soldiery establishing a camp, tents and all, outside of town. In 1858 the *Salem Gazette* described the local scene as follows: "The booths and show tents are clustered in great profusion. One tent exhibits anacondas . . . a 'blowing machine' will convince young men of the natural power of their lungs, and no doubt add twenty years to their original

life lease, for the very trifling sum of ten cents. Soap is administered in lots to suit the crowd; brass jewelry sparkles in the sunlight with a golden look that can't fail to convince one of the 'starvation prices' at which it is being re-tailed; white cakes, candy, beer, oysters and all sorts of refreshments, stand ready to be exchanged for the money of the dear people."¹⁰

We think we see from this that it was possible to make some sort of a living by following the public to its various gatherings, be they in the nature of entertainment or civic exercises.

The Belleville, Illinois *Standard* commented on the 1853 stand in that town by the P. T. Barnum Caravan that "the biggest humbug played off in the town was by the little concerns, called side-shows which got off without paying any license."¹¹

By way of explanation of the relationship between Barnum and these hangers-on, whether correct or not we don't know, the *Richmond Daily Dispatch* of August 12, 1854 printed the following: "Neither Barnum nor his agents have anything to do with the myriad of small affairs that swarm around this magnificent exhibition."

That some circus proprietors were not pleased with all theesemoths hovering around their candle cannot be doubted. As part of their 1870 advertising Van Amburgh & Co. inserted this notice in newspapers: "No sideshows, other than those belonging to Van Amburgh & Co., allowed with this exhibition."



This keeps off dice, cards, jewelry cases, chuck-a-luck, thimble rigging and the thousand other things usually hanging on to . . . a great concern. We've got the scoundrels this year, and we are aided by authorities everywhere."¹²

In 1879, during Cooper & Bailey's stand in Jackson, Michigan, the local paper reported, "The sheriff and marshal in Jackson arrested twenty-one con men, crooks, etc. . . who were following the circus. The circus detective pointed them out and they were jailed until the show left town."¹³

Two years earlier, when Montgomery Queen's company was in Jackson, the same newspaper said, "We had no idea a circus manager could be so successful in abolishing all sideshows, candy and peanut stands, peddlers and mountebanks."¹⁴

Discovering, as we have, that it was possible to drive away the army of peddlers, we have to come to the conclusion that those who did not drive them away, condoned their presence. Why would this be? Obviously, the privilege fees increased the showman's income. If the peddlers wanted space on the lot they had to pay for it. Even the Ringling Brothers Circus, known far and wide as a "Sunday school show," free of grift and even honest games, pocketed the privilege fees of food and drink vendors. Ernie Millette, the famous acrobat, observed during the 1898 Waco, Texas stand: "Our big top entrance is fronted ten-deep with snack stands selling beer, peanuts, chili con carne and every kind of edibles from candies to luncheons."¹⁵

One supposes that show managers had to decide at what point the outside vendors interfered with inside sales. The same food and drink that was peddled outside was also being sold on the seats. And the games of chance, which were a source of complaints and arguments, were either chased off the lot or brought into the kid show or the menagerie as privileges. It was fairly easy for the large circuses to dispense with unwanted outside shows. In fact, it was probably wise of them to do so, as they had a large investment and presumably wanted to have a good reputation. Smaller circuses, dependent on every dime of income, were not always in a position to turn away a source of income such as privilege men could offer. We've all heard stories wherein privilege men made more money on a season than the circus itself. And there



are just as many examples of privilege men buying into a show, partially or wholly, either to run it themselves or to use it as a vehicle for their questionable practices.

About the time of the first World War, the street carnival movement came into flower. This type of amusement, essentially a collection of out-side shows, relieved the circus from being the main focus for much of this trade. As a consequence, the activity on the circus lot became mainly the circus itself, abetted by a few local vendors, and the captive salesmen employed by the show.

Even today, at any place a crowd gath-

ers, be it at a ballpark or a movie line or a local street fair, there will be entrepreneurs hawking something. They might be fire-eaters, acrobats, mimes, jugglers or T-shirt salesmen, but however temporary their employment or small their place on the pavement they stand as the modern embodiment of a long line of out-side shows in the entertainment history of America.

Footnotes:

1. *Norfolk Advertiser*, (Dedham, MA), 11 July 1835.

2. *Jamestown Journal* (New York),

1 June 1855.

3. *Spectator* (Newport, NH), 17 August 1833.

4. Undated clipping, Chindahl papers, Circus World Museum.

5. *American Citizen* (Jackson, MI), 16 July 1851.

6. *Mahoning County Register* (Youngstown, OH), 19 June 1856.

7. Letter in the files of the Michigan Historical Collections, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

8. *Pantagraph* (Bloomington, IL), 26 May 1857.

9. *Bucyrus Journal* (OH), 28 May 1858.

10. *Salem Gazette* (MA), 27 August 1858.

11. *Standard* (Belleville, IL), 23 August 1853.

12. *Republican Register* (Galesburg, IL), 21 June 1870.

13. *Daily Citizen* (Jackson, MI), 3 June 1879.

14. *bid.*, 29 September 1877.

15. Ernest Schlee Millette and Robert Wyndham, *The Circus That Was*, Dorrance and Co. (Phila., 1971), p. 76.

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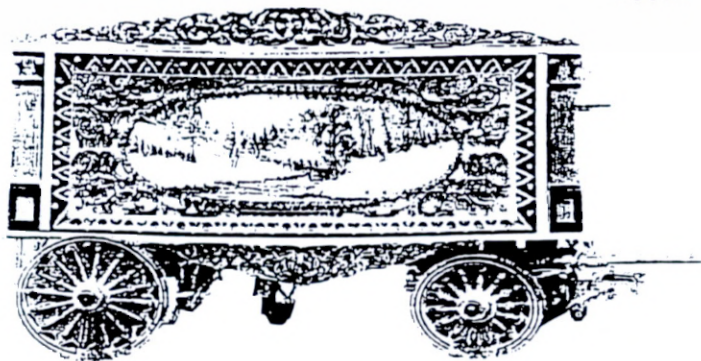
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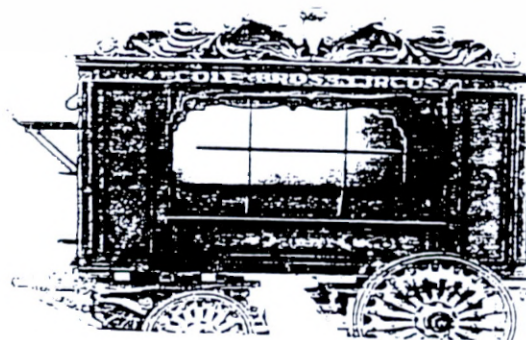


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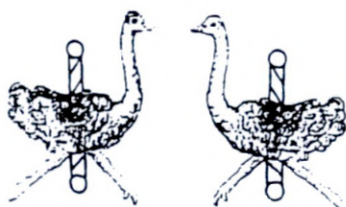
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One of the finest elephant trainers the American circus has ever produced was Lewis Reed. A rather enigmatic and gruff man, he was wholly dedicated to his work of training elephants. He probably trained more elephants than any other trainer in circus history. No greater tribute could be made than the high praise of two present day elephant trainers, Rex Williams and Robert "Smokey" Jones. Both learned about elephants from him, and both rate him the tops.

Lewis Reed was born in Austenburgh, New York, on June 4, 1881. He began his circus career in 1898 as a cage hand on the Walter L. Main Circus. The Main show went off the road in 1900, but was back in 1901. There were five elephants on the show at that time. Lewis Reed worked with these elephants. The trainer, Dick Jones, had trained these elephants to do the barber shop, bowl, a battle scene, and other tricks. The Main elephant act was different than the usual pyramid type act.

One of the five died in 1903 and the remaining four, Ada, Lou, Lena and Jenny, became the original Powers elephants. Main sold his show after the 1904 season and William Powers, Main's treasurer, took the four elephants on a theater tour. They appeared at the New York Hippodrome and became known as the Powers Hippodrome Elephants. Ada and Lou died in 1909 and were replaced by Julie and Roxie. Following these deaths, Main leased the four to Powers and eventually sold them to him.

Reed moved to the Barnum and Bailey Circus in 1907. He joined some fine elephant men on this show. George Bates was superintendent, and Harry Mooney and George "Deafy" Denman were his assistants. Joe Seccastrain and Jim Dooley were also in the Barnum elephant department.

The 1907 Barnum herd had four-teen females, Gypsy, Babe, Hattie, Nellie, Jess, Queen, Juno, Bessie, Japino, Lizzie, Mary, Topsy, Fannie and Jenny, and three males, Chief, Coco, and Pilot.

The Sparks Circus bought a baby elephant in 1898 and named her Mary. She was their only elephant until 1910 when they purchased two young males, Ollie and Mutt, from William P. Hall of Lancaster, Missouri. Paul Jacoby was in charge of this trio. However, in

CIRCUS WILD ANIMAL TRAINERS

Lewis Reed

BY BILL JOHNSON

mid-season of 1911, he left the show. Sparks placed an advertisement in the August 26, 1911 *Billboard* seeking an elephant trainer. Shortly after this Louis Reed took over the threesome. Sparks added Topsy and Queen in 1913. They had been on the J. Augustus Jones' Cole and Cooper circus. Reed taught these elephants to play baseball, bowl, and play musical instruments. One remarkable feat he accomplished was training Mary to ut-

Lewis Reed on Sparks Circus in 1919. Pfening Archives.



ter sounds on command. These were "Ma-Ma" and "Uh-Uh." In the late summer of 1916, for reasons unknown, he left the show. Jacoby returned to take over the herd. It was during this period that Mary's career came to an end.

It began at St. Pauls, Virginia on September 11th when the show hired a young boy, Walter "Red" Eldridge. He was assigned to the elephants, but warned to stay clear of Mary. The following day at Kingsport, Tennessee, when taking the herd to be watered Eldridge ignoring the sound advice he had been given and kept jabbing Mary with his bullhook. Suddenly she whirled and knocked Eldridge to the ground, and then crushed him with her foot. He died instantly.

Charles Sparks was very upset by this needless death and ordered Mary destroyed. During the matinee at Erwin, Tennessee on September 13, 1916 a hole was dug by circus hands at the C & O railroad yards. After the matinee the herd was walked to the railroad yards. A chain was placed around Mary's neck, attached at the other end to a huge railroad derrick. She was lifted off the ground, but the chain broke. Mary remained calm. A heavier chain was procured and placed around her neck. This time it held and after a few minutes, she was pronounced dead by a local veterinarian. The derrick moved over to the hole and Mary was lowered into it. A layer of lime, cinders and earth covered her. The remaining four elephants were taken back to the circus lot. Because Mary had been the lead elephant, the routine had to be changed which they settled into in a few days.

Reed was back with Sparks in 1917. On July 28th Ollie, one of the young males, died at Gardner, Massachusetts. It was thought that he had ingested some poisonous weeds. Sparks was then down to three elephants. This was remedied in February 1918, when the J. Augustus Jones' Cole Bros. World Toured Shows was auctioned off at Shreveport, Louisiana. Charles Sparks bought the shows' three elephants, Myrtle, Bonnie and Babe. These three had been worked for several seasons by the master, Cheerful Gardner.

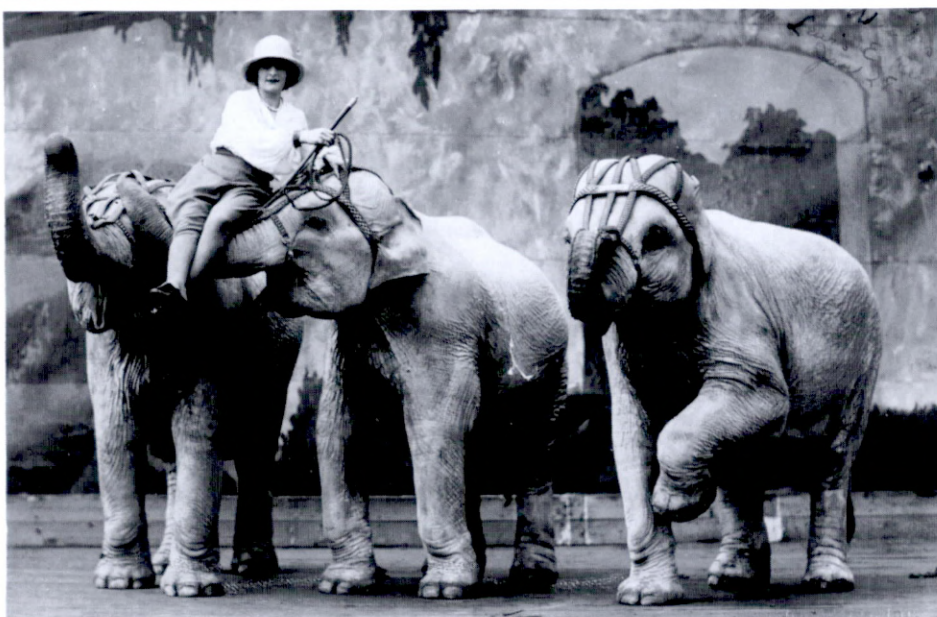
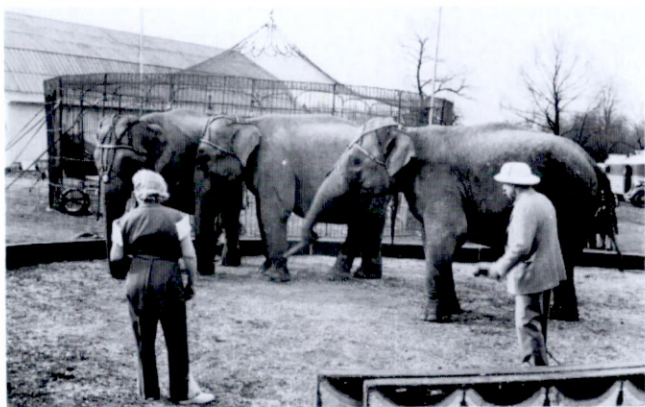
In 1919 Reed was made superintendent of the Sparks menagerie and elephants. He created quite a novelty when he had his two herds play a game of football on the track

before entering the rings for their regular routines. Mutt, the remaining male died in 1921 from unknown causes. Barnum Queen soon replaced him. Queen had spent years with the Barnum show, and went to the combined Ringling-Barnum show in 1919. In 1921, Queen along with Mary and Jess of the Barnum herd, and Veneta of the Ringling herd, were shipped to the Hagenbeck Zoo in Hamburg, Germany. Queen had no sooner arrived there when she was resold to Sparks in 1922.

The Nelson family of acrobats came to the Sparks Circus in 1923. A member of the family was the with the multi-talented Adele. Before the year was up, Adele Nelson and Lewis Reed were married.

After the 1923 season Reed left to take over the the Sells Floto Circus elephants. The herd included some young elephants imported from Hagenbeck in 1922, Jessie, Myrtle and two males, Tommy and Charley Ed. Another youngster, Virginia, had come from William P. Hall to the John Robinson circus in 1921. Virginia went to Sells-Floto in 1922. The rest of the herd was Kas, Mo, Mary, Freida, Trilby, Big Tillie, and two more males, Young Snyder and Billy Sunday. It was an explosive herd, subject to running off on the spur of the moment. They caused no problems during Reed's tenure, a credit to his knowledge and handling skill. After Reed left they erupted. In 1926 they stampeded, first at Edmonton, Alberta; then at Calgary, Alberta; and a third time at Cranbrook, British Columbia on August 6. This romp cost the life of the female, Myrtle. The tough young male, Charley Ed, was loose for 39 days before his recapture. He grew into a fine adult elephant, but remained tough. He was finally donated to the San Francisco zoo in March 1936. The zoo changed his name to Wally, but not his disposition. He killed his keeper, Ed Brown. For this he

Adele and Lewis Reed at Terrell Jacobs' rodeo in Peru, Indiana on April 5, 1942. Pfening Archives.



Adele Nelson Reed and her elephants Myrtle, Tilly and Jenny in the early 1930s. Pfening Archives.

was executed at the zoo on June 19, 1936.

Adele Nelson Reed began the 1924 season of on Sparks, but left in August to join Lewis. Adele worked a group of lionesses in an opening display on Sells-Floto in 1925. In the elephant number she handled a herd of young bulls.

Lewis and Adele decided to go on their own. With this in mind they bought three baby elephants in England. Reed went to England to get the youngsters but found them in such poor condition they were unable to travel. He stayed with them, restoring them to good health, and training them for the ring. The three were named Myrtle, Tillie and Jenny. They would become renown as the "Adele Nelson Dancing Elephants."

During the winter season of 1929-30 the Nelson elephants appeared with the Bertram Mills Circus at Olympia in London. When they returned to this country, they played in vaudeville, at fairs and with many circuses. They were with Frank Wirth in 1934 and 1936; Gorman Bros. Circus in 1935 and 1936; Jack Hoxie in 1937 and Garden Bros. Circus in 1938.

After fifteen years of touring with their elephants they sold them in 1942 to Ben Davenport for his Dailey Bros. Circus. Reed became superintendent of



Reed, in shorts, with a tusker in India in 1947. Author's collection.

menagerie on this show. The Dailey show had three elephants then, Rosie, Mary and the male Nemo. Nemo was handled and worked by Raymond "Dog Red" Frigvogel. Nemo was presented as a single act, but he became more dangerous with each passing year. Charles Cohn, Dailey show assistant manager, tried to sell Nemo, then tried to give him away with no takers. At Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, on June 11, 1947, a local man, Merle Burns, was hired to destroy him. This he did, with one shot from a .3006 rifle. In 1943 Davenport bought the Weir elephants, Hank, Cutie, Trixie, Maude and Luna. In August 1944 he bought the female Japino from the World of Mirth Shows. Japino had appeared as Jap on Gorman Bros. and the WPA Circus in



The Dailey Bros. Circus herd of 23 elephants at Gonzales, Texas winter quarters in February 1948. Smokey Jones is at left. Rex Williams is the trainer at his right. Pfening Archives.

the middle 1930s before going to the carnival. The Dailey show herd was growing.

Freida was a veteran circus elephant, having seen service on Sells-Floto and Al G. Barnes before being sold to the noted wild animal collector Frank Buck. Buck used her at his New York World's Fair exhibit in 1939, and then gave her to the Cleveland, Ohio zoo. The zoo called her Osa and soon began having problems with her. She refused to respond to any commands. After a few years of this they gave up in desperation and called on Reed. He recognized her as Freida from his 1924-25 Floto herd. He called her name repeatedly, kept cueing her into various tricks. Finally she listened and slowly returned to her old routines. Reed worked each day and in a short time she was her old circus self. She lived for many years at the zoo, succumbing from a cerebral hemorrhage there on November 17, 1957.

Ben Davenport wanted a big circus, and that meant a big herd of elephants. He sent Reed to India in 1947. Through the game warden in Mysore, India, Reed found some baby elephants, some of which had just been captured in that province. Finding the elephants was simple compared to the problems of getting boys to take care of the babies on ship-board. Each of the boys' families had to be paid 250 rupees. A special permit was required by the Mysore State government. They also needed visas, shots and clothes. The first shipment was ready in 1947. This consisted of five females, Mary, Maude, Bessie, Conti and Norma, and two males, Tommy and Charlie. The two males proved to be as different as night and day.



Reed and Singh with Little Butch on Dailey Bros. in 1948. Author's collection.

Charlie took the bad route. After a couple of seasons he was sold to Circo Union in Mexico. Tommy was a good bull. In 1953, he was sold to Tony Diano of Canton, Ohio. For many years he traveled the land with four females, Calcutta, Mysore, Minnie and Dolly. After Diano retired he sold his herd to the Ringling-Barnum circus. Tommy became King Tusk, and was made a feature attraction. Tommy aka King Tusk is the oldest living male elephant in the country today.

Charles Hunt and four of the five baby elephants trained by Reed in October 1948. Author's collection.



In the second Dailey shipment were ten females and a lone male, George. Reed departed Mysore, India in November 1947 on the British freighter *Irish Bank*. Fifty-six days later they docked in Boston harbor on January 8, 1958. The weather had been bitter cold crossing the Atlantic. To counteract this problem Reed fed the babies a mixture of oatmeal, rice and hot milk, plus fifteen gallons of rum. They may have arrived slightly tipsy, but they arrived. George died from pneumonia that winter.

This group consisted of Tex, Nellie, Virginia, Eva, Calcutta, Mysore, and Little Butch, the tiniest elephant ever imported. Little Butch came under the care of a Hindu boy, Arumi Singh, and was used for publicity exploitation. He died in Vancouver, British Colombia on July 8, 1949.

In the spring of 1948, Mrs. Madeline Park, an internationally known animal sculptress, was in India collecting animals. She had been commissioned by Charles Hunt, owner of Hunt Bros. Circus, to buy ten baby elephants for his circus. She succeeded in acquiring five. Two named Gita and Dinnu were purchased from the Maharajah of Mysore, two more, Rancee and Sita were procured from elephant trappers in the Coorg Forest. The fifth, Chandree, was bought at an elephant auction in Travancore.

The first four sailed on the British freighter *City of Swansea* in September 1948. Chandree was unable to make the sailing, and was shipped later. The quartet arrived in Boston in October 1948. They were transported by truck to the Hunt winter quarters at Florence, New Jersey. Reed was hired to train these babies. Smokey Jones assisted him. Reed accomplished his task in his usual skillful manner over the resentment of Captain Roy Bush, the show's elephant superintendent, who wanted to train them himself.

While Reed was working

on these elephants Henry Trefflich, the New York animal dealer, brought in the first shipment of baby elephants by air. Three of the six in this shipment were sold to the newly formed Biller Bros. Circus. They were named Margie, Betty, and Lillian. Two trainers attempted to train these youngsters, but without success. Reed arrived on the show in July, 1949, accompanied by his faithful assistant Jones. Training was done on the road. Unfortunately Betty died when the show reached winter quarters in December. In February 1950 Lillian was sold to the Atlanta, Georgia zoo. Jones worked Margie as a single in 1950, then departed. Bill O'Harris handled Margie in 1951. She was sold to the Kelly-Miller Circus in 1952, and went from there to the Carson and Barnes show. She died on that show on September 21, 1981.

In 1950 George Pughe and Archie Guyer operated a circus called Ward Bros. Reed was on this show with three baby elephants, Tex, Nellie and Virginia, leased from Ben Davenport. The building at Long Beach, California, in July 1950 was a difficult place to work elephants. They had to go up a ramp, then onto an elevator to the arena on the second floor. At a Saturday matinee the babies became frightened and ran, knocking Reed aside. He managed to slip into an alcove, but his arm was broken. Despite this painful injury he rounded up his charges and took them outside to their tent and chained them up. Veteran elephant trainer Joe Metcalf, who lived nearby in Venice, was called in to finish the date.

During the summer of 1951 Reed was with the Terrell Jacobs Circus on the James E. Strates carnival where he trained Jacobs' baby female elephant named Jean.

In early 1952 Reed began training the largest herd of baby elephants of his career. It began when the Ringling-Barnum show imported seven babies called Tex, Padmuh, Tara, Yamina, Rani, Seeta and Little Rajee. When the seven arrived at the Sarasota winterquarters Reed and Jones were on hand to start training sessions. During the 1953 season the seven babies were worked in the center ring by Arkie Scott.



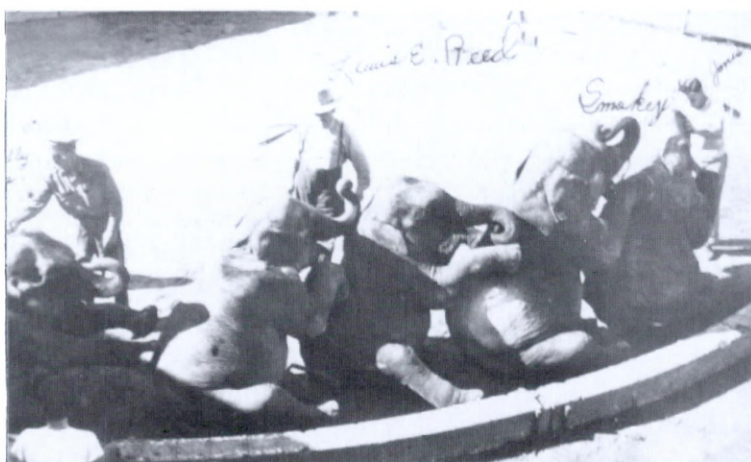
Smokey Jones and Lewis Reed training one of the Ringling-Barnum babies in 1952. Author's collection.

Scott's success had been with big elephants and he had no end of trouble with the babies. Hugo Schmitt was brought in to handle the youngsters.

Twenty more baby elephants arrived in on the Ringling-Barnum show in 1954. These were Jean, Mo, Fannie, Adele, Mysore, Suzanne, Pinky, Little Mary, Siam, Hank (or Henrietta), Luna, Eva, Betty, India, Lucy, Calcutta, Trixie, Cutie, Cass and Rajee.

Aside from teaching the babies the basics, for handling and for the circus ring, they were taken on walks daily around the winter quarters. This was to accustom them to people, cars, or anything they might encounter on the road. Loud music was played daily in their elephant corral. The elephant production number for the 1955 season was to be "Mama's in the Park." John Ringling North wanted six big elephants in this number, pushing

Reed and Jones training the Ringling-Barnum baby elephants in a ring in 1953. Author's collection.



baby carriages with a baby aboard. This was accomplished.

In early 1955 Baptiste Schreiber arrived on the show with three baby elephants, Bambi, age three; Blondie, age four; and Lissy, age five (later corrupted to Lizzie). These reportedly could present a trained musical act. This turned out to be untrue, and the trio was added to the baby herd.

In the spring of 1955 fifty-one elephants were loaded for the trip to the opening in Madison Square Garden. They included the thirty baby elephants and twenty-

one large ones. The older bulls were Marcella, Big Modoc, Myrtle, Barnes Babe, Barnes Jewel, Wallace Ruth, Barnes Ruth, Lois, Tony, Josky, Sparks Mary, Wallace Babe, Judy, Topsy, Karnaudi, Minyak, Muta, Sabu, Icky, Wallace Trilby, and the African, Emily.

During the July 1955 Detroit, Michigan Ringling-Barnum stand C. R. Montgomery arrived with a shipment of baby animals. Included was a African male elephant named Louis. Smokey Jones was in charge of moving the herd that totaled 52, the largest number ever transported by a circus.

Louis' name was changed to Diamond and he was trained by Hugo Schmitt to perform in the ring. As the African male grew in size he became unruly and was donated to the Knoxville, Tennessee zoo. While at Knoxville he sired the first African elephant to be born in the Western Hemisphere. Diamond died at the zoo on September 10, 1980.

In August 1955, three old Ringling-Barnum elephants, Ringling Jenny, Eva and Wallace Jewel were sold to Charles Garvin, operator of Beech Bend Park at Bowling Green, Kentucky. Reed accompanied them by truck to the park. He remained for a week, then returned to Florida.

Vickie was a six year old elephant belonging to a zoo at the Airport Amusement Park in Charlotte, North Carolina. In September 1955 while being loaded into a truck for a trip to a fair she broke away from her keeper and ran off into the marshlands nearby. She remained free for eleven days. Reed was in the area to meet a ship bringing some elephants for Hagen Bros. and

the Kelly-Miller circuses. He was asked to help in the hunt. After trailing Vickie for hours, he finally found her. By that time both Reed and Vickie were exhausted. Reed was unable to help in the capture. Vickie's keeper and some assistants succeeded in getting some ropes around her feet and neck. Tired and foot weary, Vickie submitted and trudged back to the zoo.

The Greatest Show on Earth folded its big top for the last time in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on July 16, 1956. From then on the herd was reduced in size. Tex, one of the babies, died in 1957. Four babies, Tara, Yamina, Rani and Seeta, along with a large elephant Judy were sold to the Mexico City zoo. Cass was sold to the Hattiesburg, Mississippi zoo. Eva was sold to Eddie Billetti and Pinky went to Paul Miller.

In 1958 Charles Garvin acquired twelve more elephants from the Ringling show. These were Rajee, Mysore, Mo, Trixie, Hank, Little Mary, Adele, Lissy, Susanne, Blondie, Bambi, and the large elephant Karnaudi. Jones accompanied nine of them to the Garvin's Kentucky park in June 1958 and remained there for a time.

Jones recalled an amusing incident that happened while he was at Garvin's park. Curley Vernon of the United Exposition Shows came to buy a ride elephant.



Lewis and Adele Nelson Reed in 1942. Pfening Archives.

Smokey picked out a good one for him. Vernon declined, saying he would pick his own. This he proceeded to do. A howdah was placed on the one he selected.

Vernon climbed in the howdah. He told his man to lead the elephant. The elephant took off at a fast clip and headed for some trees. A low limb knocked the howdah and Vernon to the ground. Somewhat embarrassed Vernon departed with no ride elephant. Eventually Garvin sold all of his elephants.

By 1959 Reed had retired to his home in Chatham, New York. Not far from Chatham, across the Hudson River, is the town of Catskill, home of the Catskill Game Farm. At that time they were exhibiting a baby Asian elephant. Reed was seen at times standing by this exhibit, staring at the baby elephant with a slight smile on his face. What thoughts were going through his mind we can only imagine. Perhaps he saw the scores of baby elephants he had trained in his lifetime. An endless parade. A parade that would shortly end.

Reed died of a heart attack at his home in Chatham, New York on May 29, 1960 at age 78.

My thanks to those who helped prepare this article, Bill "Buckles" Woodcock, Robert "Smokey" Jones, Jerry P. Riley, Lenore De La Vega and Melinda Priestly of the Hertzberg Collection, Bill McCarthy of the Circus World Museum and the Pfening Archives.

A Reckless Era of Aerial Performance

The Evolution of Trapeze

Just how important is it to be the first to do a thing? How important is it to do the most, to go the highest, the farthest? How important? Some people have died for it.

Did you ever wonder who first swung from a trapeze? Did you ever wonder when the first aerial somersault was thrown? Did you ever wonder how the complex team aerial performances were developed and who invented them? If you have, you are not alone.

In 1985, circus historian Steve Gossard discovered a conflict. Two different cities in the United States had taken credit for the invention of the particular type of trapeze performance called the flying return act. Since then Gossard has been fixated on finding the source of the invention of the flying return act and solving the mystery. He has spent thousands of hours scrolling through 19th century periodicals in tracing the evolution of the various types of trapeze performances.

What he uncovered is more than a historical study. It is an adventure. It is a mystery. It is the story of A Reckless Era of Aerial Performance. Share the author's sense of discovery as he traces the evolution of this daring and beautiful art form, and chronicles the exploits of dozens of long-forgotten foolhardy aerial daredevils.



Send check or money order for \$20 (plus \$3 tax and postage) to:
Steve Gossard, 10 Siesta Ct., Bloomington, IL 61704

The Age, published at Riverview, Kansas City, on Saturday, August 30, is all that has been discovered concerning Sam MacFlinn's activities in Kansas for 1890. "Sam MacFlinn's Circus and Menagerie now exhibiting on 1st street near the Catholic church is the best show for any price ever seen in this city. Bar none."

"McFlinn Circus and Menagerie is worthy of a visit. Every person who likes refined fun, splendidly trained animals, superb athletic exercises, good music and fine singing and dancing, all of the highest order, should avail themselves of the opportunity now presented. Every attache is affable and polite, and the management is in the hands of gentlemanly business men."

A show of which nearly nothing is known advertised in the Colony Free Press on September 4:

"Coming.
ROBINSON'S
--Mammoth--

Pavilion Show. and the
SMITH FAMILY at COLONY

Monday, Sept. 8,
1 and 7 p. m.

A Fifty Cent Show for
Ten and Twenty
Cents.

See Bills and Learn
What it is.

Monday, Sept. 8."

On Sept 11, the Free Press reported that, "The circus crowd had some trouble with the railroad track and laid over Tuesday."

In a confusing sentence the Free Press also stated that, "The circus Tuesday (sic) was about as slim as the crowd that attended it. We speak from hearsay and outs de observation (sic)."

The Robinson organization made an item in the September 6, 1890 New York Clipper: "The Robinson Ten Cent Circus gave a performance (August) 27 (Topeka). While at Meriden a few days ago their tent was totally demolished by a cyclone. They came to Topeka and secured the old camp meeting tent, which will be used temporarily."

There are no reports of this show in the Topeka press.

THE ONLY TRIPLE-HORNED UNICORN

Chapter 6, Part Two

To Delight the Senses and Improve the Mind

By Orin Copple King

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The first news of the Greatest Show On Earth in Kansas, in 1890, appeared in the Topeka State Journal on August 7. In a brief paragraph it was announced that, "A representative of Barnum and Bailey's great shows was in Topeka today on business with the railroads, and making arrangements for the appearance of that show here Oct. 4. The show will be in Kansas City two days, October 6th and 7th."

Dick Ball, an agent for the circus, was in Topeka September 3, and placed advertising with all of the local newspapers, scheduled to begin September 20 in the Journal.

Also on September 3, the Journal published the special round trip excursion rates offered by the Rock Island for travelers to the circus. North of Topeka on the St. Joseph branch, the following round trip rates applied: Elmont 8 miles, \$0.32; Hoyt 14 miles, .56; Mayetta 22 miles,

Illustration of Nero spec from a Barnum & Bailey newspaper courier. Pfening Archives.

81; Holton 30 miles, 1.09; Straight Creek ? miles, \$1.43; Whiting 41 miles, 1.63; Horton 49 miles, 1.97; Sugar Works ? miles, 2.40.

The Straight Creek and Sugar Works stations vanished long before the Rock Island disappeared and their distance from Topeka is unknown.

Towns to the west of Topeka were given the following rates: Valencia 11 miles, \$0.45; Wabaunsee 40 miles, \$1.63; Zeandale 46 miles, 1.81; Manhattan 53

miles, 2.05; Alma 36 miles, 1.44; Willard 15 miles, .60; Maple Hill 20 miles, .81; Vera ? miles, .96; Paxico 28 miles, 1.12; McFarland 32 miles, 1.27; Volland 43 miles, 1.75.

Rates charged by the other railroads serving Topeka, the Santa Fe, Union Pacific and Missouri Pacific are unknown but they were undoubtedly comparable to those of the Rock Island. All roads did a large business on circus day.

Featured in all advertising and countless handouts was "Imre Kiralfy's World Famous Spectacle NERO, or the Destruction of Rome!"

To accommodate the spectacle which comprised the final portion of the program, the show claimed the "Largest Stage in the World, 450 feet long. Most Stupendous Canvas ever made, 550 feet long."

The production was presented in five separate tableaux described in a handout that was used over and over in Kansas.

"The action is spread over five tableaux, and is strikingly historic. In the first there is plenty of spirited action; for when the population turn outside the city, conflicts occur between the mob and the guard, in which several hundred

persons take part. In the second tableau we have an imperial 'fete' day in the city, in which the emperor's triumphal procession takes part, and there is an impressive chorus. The third tableau draws upon the resources of the establishment; for the the circus Maximus, and, in the presence of Nero, there are games, foot-races, chariot-races, elephant-races and combats, which lead to revolts and tragedy. The next tableau is by moonlight--conspirators plotting the downfall of the emperor. The final scene is devoted



to the interior of the palace, where a chorus and dance are suddenly interrupted by the glare of the burning city. Then it is that the emperor gloats over the scene. His death, however, brings a well-conceived drama to a close."

The Greatest Show On Earth had spent the late fall of 1889 and the winter of 1890 in London on an engagement of 14 weeks. The London run, according to the ads in the Topeka papers, was patronized by "Princes of the Royal Blood, the Nobility, Clergy, the Press and People of Europe." The typography of the ad might cause the casual reader to believe that Barnum & Bailey had on exhibition "THE ENTIRE ROYAL FAMILY OF GREAT BRITAIN."

Even without the Prince of Wales, the pageant was a tremendous production. "Positively 1,200 Dancers, Actors and Performers" with "the Grandest Costumes Ever seen." The extravaganza as seen in Kansas was "Identical in every detail with the Unparalleled Exhibition Produced and Presented in London."

A handout in the Topeka *Kansas Democrat* reported the participation in the spectacle of "hundreds of coryphees." The *Journal* on October 6 stated that "There is nothing in the story that the show left some of their ballet girls in Topeka." The rumor of abandoned dancers was based on dissension within the troupe. Reports of an impending strike of chorus girls appeared in the *Journal* on August 1: "The girls receive only \$6 to \$12 per week and are obliged to endure many hardships. They will make a demand for an increase of wages and hotel accommodations at two-day stands." If the dancers ever did strike, the news failed to reach Kansas.

The *Democrat*, an evening paper, reported on the parade: "THE BIG SHOW. An Immense Procession Witnessed by Vast Crowds."

"The Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth, arrived in the city at an early hour this morning from St. Joseph. The big street parade left the show grounds at 10:30 o'clock and was witnessed by great throngs of delighted people along the entire line of march. As many animals were exhibited in the parade as are usually seen at an ordinary menagerie. A herd of ten elephants two of which were of unusual size, a herd of camels three teams of trained zebras and a half dozen open cages of wild animals were among the novel features. There was a large cavalcade of ladies and gentlemen mounted on magnificent horses. The streets, particularly Kansas avenue, were packed with people."

"Farmers began to arrive at an early

hour and incoming trains on all roads were heavily loaded. The show has attracted more people to the city than any other show has for many years."

"At this evening's performance the fall of Nero will be the first thing on the programme and those desiring to see it should be on hand early."



Illustration from the 1890 Barnum & Bailey courier. Pfening Archives.

The big news of Barnum & Bailey's Topeka appearance occurred at the intersection of Eighth Street and Kansas Avenue as the show was moving to the runs. All Topeka papers carried the story, but the Topeka *Daily Capital* on October 5, told it best: "ATTACHED THE CIRCUS. Willie Sells Gets in His Work on the Barnum & Bailey Show."

"Last night about 12 o'clock as Barnum & Bailey's tent pole wagon reached Eighth Street on Kansas Avenue, Deputy Sheriff Kuykendall served an attachment upon the outfit consisting of the wagon and center poles and eight horses. The attachment was served in the interest of Will Sells of this city. Last year Mr. Sells made a contract with the circus firm to travel with them to Europe, and he alleges that the company treated him shamefully and required him to do menial labor and finally when he wished to return to America and asked for funds, they informed him that if wished to go back he could swim. He now sues for a breach of contract and made the attachment for the sum of \$1,100."

"Sundry oaths floated upon the air when the drivers found that the law stood across their path, but Kuykendall firmly informed them that they could not proceed. After some delay a cash bond for the amount was given and the wagon was allowed to proceed."

The story of the attachment had its roots in the late summer of 1889, when

Willie was a star rider on the Sells-Barrett show. All of Willie's performing life had been on shows owned by the Sells brothers and every year toward the end of the season the brothers had renewed his contract. In 1889 no contract was offered and Willie did not inquire about it. Lewis and Peter Sells claimed later that the omission was merely an oversight, but this explanation is less than satisfactory.

There is no evidence that Willie, in 1889, was developing a passion for the wild life, but his carousing in London when working for Barnum & Bailey was an indication of things to come. Perhaps his uncles failed to renew Willie's contract because of his emerging irresponsibility. Willie in 1889 was 24 years old, an excellent athlete considered unusually handsome, and something of a matinee idol and a ladies' man. For whatever reason, no contract was offered and Willie asked no questions.

Another aspect of Willie's career was a personal contract between Willie and a Japanese troupe of seven. The Japanese troupe received \$100 per week from Willie, and while on the Sells-Barrett show Willie was paid \$125 per week for the services of the Japanese. Lewis and Peter Sells objected to Willie's contract with the Japanese and this became another contention between Willie and his uncles. When Willie signed with Barnum & Bailey the Japanese were part of the deal.

At Alton, Illinois, September 11, 1889, Willie signed the following contract: "In consideration of two hundred dollars (\$200.) per week, or its equivalent in English money, I hereby agree to give the services of myself and the Japanese troupe now controlled by me, consisting of eight in all, for the public performances in connection with the Barnum and London United Shows, for the entire Season in London, England. Free passage to and from England to be paid by Barnum and Bailey for the eight persons above specified and board of same to be paid by me while in England. Twelve performances to constitute a week."

R. F. Hamilton, agent, signed for Barnum & Bailey.

Willie's petition was filed October 4, 1890, in the District Court of Shawnee County, Kansas, and was assigned Case No. 12062.

The contract specifically stated that Willie would pay the board of his Japanese troupe, but when the suit over the attachment was filed the petition was amended to state that by agreement be-

fore the contract was signed it was understood that, "the said defendants should pay the board of the said plaintiff and his troupe of Japanese, while in England, and by mistake in the phraseology of said contract the same neglects so to state."

By the terms of the contract Willie was to receive \$2,800 for the 14 weeks of the engagement. Willie claimed that only \$2,730 was paid him.

Willie claimed that, in violation of the contract, he was forced to pay the board of himself and the Japanese troupe which, he believed "was reasonably worth ten dollars (\$10) per day during the period of ninety-eight days while he was engaged in performance under the said contract."

In the second count of his petition Willie asserted that Barnum & Bailey failed to provide him with transportation to the United States. Willie had to pay his own way home which cost him \$60.

According to Willie, Barnum & Bailey owed him: "Board for himself and Japanese \$980; transportation for himself \$60; underpayment of contract \$70. Total \$1,110."

In addition, Willie demanded interest at the rate of seven per cent from October 1, 1889, and costs.

On October 21, Barnum & Bailey filed an answer to Willie's petition. A. B. Campbell, attorney for the defendants, presented a receipt from Willie acknowledging payment in full under the contract.

Campbell claimed that Barnum & Bailey had purchased a first-class ticket to the United States but Willie could not be found by sailing time for he had "abandoned their said show before completing his contract for service."

Barnum & Bailey refused to acknowledge Willie's claim that the intent to pay the board of Willie and his troupe was omitted from Willie's contract through error. In conclusion, Campbell's answer to Willie's petition stated that, "during all of the season he was dissipated and negligent of his duty and failed to give twelve performances per week as required to do and was absent for and during thirteen of the performances of the show of defendants and when present, by reason of his dissipation and negligence, gave his part of the performance in so negligent, unskillful and slovenly manner as to be a detriment rather than a benefit to the show of the defendants; that the said plaintiff abandoned the show of the defendants before the close of the season without the knowledge or consent of defendants and wholly failed to fulfill his contract, and by reason

of the facts herein covered the defendants were damaged in the sum of five hundred dollars which sum they set up by way of counter claim against any sum which may be found due the plaintiff and pray judgement for said of five hundred dollars and costs of suit."

The answer of Barnum & Bailey to Willie's petition presented strong opposition to Willie's claims. There is no indication of what the settlement might have been. An award to Willie would probably have

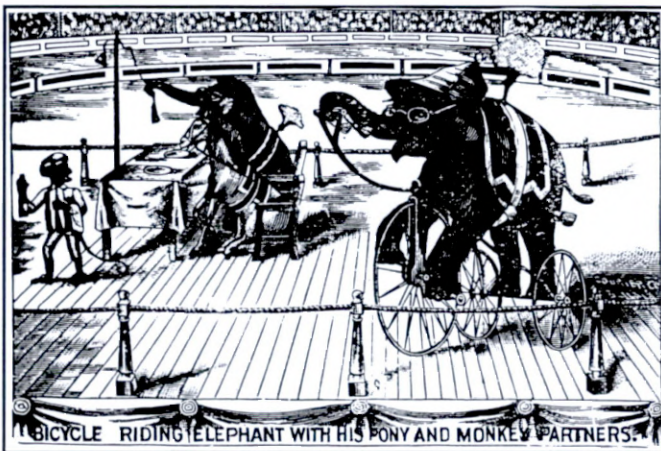


Illustration from the 1890 Barnum & Bailey courier. Pfening Archives.

been reported to the press for Willie's boastful nature would have opened his mouth wide and often. A loss would have been buried silently. It is most likely that the suit died for lack of prosecution.

The remainder of Barnum & Bailey's short tour of Kansas passed without incident.

The *Parsons Palladium*, concerning circus day, October 9, reported that: "There were no burglaries committed while Barnum & Bailey's circus was here. It is the one-horse shows that have burglars and fakirs attached to them."

One fakir, not connected with the show, did a rousing business, as reported by the *Palladium*.

"On show day a stranger sold 160 watches on the street at \$1.00 each. He first passed one of the watches around and it was a first class Waterbury and then suckers commenced to buy, and were to leave them in the sack until he made them all a present, which was a steel pen. The watches were solid tin, all in one piece, with dials painted on them, and many of the suckers broke their jack knives trying to get on the inside to see the wheels go round. There will be suckers as long as the world lasts."

The first Kansas date of 1890 for Wallace & Company's Great World's Menagerie, Real Roman Hippodrome and In-

ternational Three Ring Circus was Saturday, May 10. A one-column ad the length of the page appeared in the *Pittsburg Smelter* on April 26 and featured a cut of a balloon sailing through the clouds and a fearless aeronaut leaping into space holding what appears to be an umbrella. The aeronaut was the only person in the ad mentioned by name.

"MISS DORA MONTROSE

The Ladie who Jumps from the Clouds.

A SIGHT OF THRILLING PERIL

To be Witnessed Positively each Day."

The generosity of Ben Wallace was proven by the announcement that the balloon ascension was, "ABSOLUTELY FREE, To the patrons of these shows. It is the pleasure of the management to announce that they have succeeded in perfecting an engagement with the distinguished aeronaut and scientist MISS DORA MONTROSE, famous throughout Europe and America for her numberless thrilling ascensions and scientific discoveries, and who will make, daily a grand trip to the clouds. Being born into space with cyclonic speed by the lifting power of her newly invented air-ship CLEOPATRA. Thus all visitors to the model organization and community at large. Free and exhilarating spectacle. For invariable success and rapid ascension. No aeronaut can compete."

Immediately below was an engraving of a knife thrower and his nerveless assistant which related to nothing in the advertisement.

The ad continued, "A grand zoological garden, affording the children in the land a most appropriate lesson in natural history it is possible to place before them. This unrivaled circus stands at the front of all arenic organizations. It is many times greater and grander than ever this season, with new and better actors, male and female. See the monster street parade made every forenoon of exhibition day, it correctly tells the story of the show a thousand times better than the lifeless illustrations."

The *Smelter* had a limitless supply of hyphens.

This ad, and nearly every other ad used in subsequent dates, was headed with the engraving of the balloon and the aeronaut. At *Pittsburg* the balloon was lettered "Wallace & Co's Great Railroad Shows." At other dates the lettering might read "Wallace & Co's Circus and Menagerie."

The name of James Anderson appeared nowhere in the ad nor in any of the handouts printed in the *Smelter*.

A reporter visited the advance car on April 25, and the following day the *Smelter* carried the story.

"The Poster Car. Yesterday the handsome and attractive poster car of Wallace & Co., stood on the Frisco side track near the Electric light works. It is in charge of G. P. Campbell, a bred and born Kansan, formerly from Topeka. The car is very complete in its appointments and is laden with posters large and small. There are fourteen men traveling with Mr. Campbell who see that the miles and miles of bill boards on their route are properly papered. In the corner as you enter stands a little engine for cooking the paste and pumping the water. The paste is made out side the car and is kept in the 'cellar' along with the buckets and brushes. The office is located in the center of the car and is very dainty and pretty. There are easy chairs, sofa, desk and type writer. The window curtains of china silk is caught back with a pink ribbon and the whole appearance is as cosy as a lady's boudoir. Above the cupboard packed with lithographs and posters are berths where the men sleep. The outside of the car is elegantly painted representing the animals in their native wilds. In a few days another car will follow this, and on May 10 the show will be here in all its glory, fresh from winter quarters. The first exhibition will be given Saturday at Peru, Indiana where the animals are wintered. There are large farms there and names for each kind of animals. These are the elephant buildings, and apartments for the cat animals and so on through the list. Animals from Africa and Asia require warmer quarters than the others and the heat from the steam pipes is regulated accordingly. At the beginning of the season great improvements have to be made. This year the repairs and additions will cost \$50,000.

"Mr. Campbell has no kitchen department attached to his car and he declares the hotels on the route are killing him, however he paid a pretty compliment to Pittsburg hotels and lamented having to leave so soon."

"Wallace & Co's great railroad show has come and gone, and have given universal satisfaction," the *Smelter* reported the day after the exhibitions. "Saturday was one day of pleasure to every one from the forming of the parade until all the wagons were loaded last night, and the great engine puffed away drawing its long train of 22 white cars. The street parade was fine, showing to good advantage their splendid collection of



Wallace & Co. advance advertising car. Pfening Archives.

trained horses and caged animals. The program consisted of 21 numbers faithfully carried out. Everything about the show was clean, the costumes were magnificent and the acting of a very high order. The bare backed riding, the trapeze performance and the novelties introduced were the best ever witnessed in any show. If space permitted this morning THE SMELTER would attempt an extended description of the show and the performance and the performers. The balloon ascension was a success and intensely pleased the gathered throngs. After rising several thousand feet in the air, the aeronaut swung to the parachute and descended slowly and safely, alighting on the top of a residence on Elm near Euclid Avenue. The show completely captured Pittsburg and her people and will always be welcome."

The April 24 Columbus *Advocate* ran a short handout that appeared in nearly every town the show played: "A Good Show at Last!

Benjamin E. Wallace. Pfening Archives.

"At last we are to have a show under canvas that is worthy of and will receive general patronage. We allude to Wallace & Co's Great World's Menagerie and International Three Ring Circus, which is to be in Columbus May 12th. This entertainment has given general satisfaction wherever it has exhibited, and is everywhere spoken of as being in every respect superior."

The first report of gambling appeared in the *Advocate* following the exhibitions of May 12: "Experience teaches a dear school, but fools learn at no other." For further particulars call on or address some of the cute individuals who paid \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50 and so on for a little experience at the circus last Monday."

Despite the gambling, the *Advocate* had nothing but good to report concerning the show: "Wallace & Co's show exhibited in this city last Monday afternoon to a large and enthusiastic audience. The street parade at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, which was witnessed by a vast throng of people around the square, was the best ever made upon our streets.

"The performance in the afternoon was a grand one and gave general satisfaction. It was largely attended. At the conclusion of the concert which followed the main performance, a grand balloon ascension and parachute jump was made by the aeronaut accompanying the show. He ascended several hundred feet in the air, made a jump and landed safely in Park addition near the school building.

"About 5 o'clock in the evening a hard hail and rain storm prevailed which continued for more than an hour and prevented a performance in the evening.

"Wallace & Co's show is one above the average and should draw good crowds where ever it goes.

"The stock and animals, especially the horses were the finest that have ever been in Columbus. The gentlemen having the show in charge were very clever and gentlemanly and made many friends during their stay in this city."

In another column the *Advocate* reported that, "Some hail stones fell nearly as large as a hen egg."

Wallace & Co. had unusual competition in Fredonia for the exhibitions of May 14. The *Wilson County Citizen*, Fredonia, ran the following handout on May 9: "P.

P. Belt, the electrician, gun maker and machinist, of this city, will have an exhibition of a novel character on circus day, in Fredonia. Every person has heard of the wonderful invention of Thomas A. Edison--the phonograph, or talking machine. After ten years of continuous labor, Mr. Edison has perfected his wonderful talking machine. He has very recently applied the phonograph, or talking machine, to the interior of very large and beautiful dolls, which talk in amazingly clear tones. Mr. Belt has procured one of these talking dolls and will have it on exhibition on circus day in Fredonia. Admission, 10 cents."

In another column Belt warned the public that, "Perhaps you will never have another opportunity in your life to see and hear the most wonderful machine



ever invented. It talks in clear and distinct tones."

The *Citizen*, following circus day, reported that, "The attendance was nearly as great as at former circuses, in spite of the hard times, and the show was highly satisfactory to all. The balloon ascension was a failure due to a hole burned through the fabric."

How P. P. Belt fared was not reported.

The *Citizen* carried a story about a situation that prevailed in nearly every town Wallace played: "VICTIMS.—In another place the *CITIZEN* commends Wallace & Co.'s circus as a creditable institution as a show, but it must say that it is not commendable in the manager to permit gamblers to ply their confidence games on open ground immediately in front of the main entrance thereto. The ball and shell trick 'caught' many suckers—men who doubtless thought they had seen enough of the world to keep them from being bitten by such a device. The victims included professional men, successful farmers and one preacher. Some were gray-haired and others not only gray-haired but quite devout church men. Those 'taken in' numbered not less than twenty persons, and may have reached thirty. Several old men went almost wild in their desire to borrow money to bet on a game in which they were bound to be dead losers unless the shell and ball manipulator let them win a little for bait. One farmer near town is said to have lost \$150, while others lost from \$50 down to \$15. Quite a number of the dupes lived in town. A variety of comment might be offered, but what's the use?"

"The parade today [May 17]," according to the *Winfield Daily Courier*, "was very good, there being enough of the 'grand pageantry, gilt and tinsel' with the usual etceteras to please the taste of the most fastidious. There were five bands and a half besides the calliope which wound up the procession with the 'Queen.'"

Among the musicians were Harry McElfresh, Willie Junker, John Gamble and Prof. Goetz who had a happy reunion with J. F. Cheek of Winfield. Cheek knew them when they lived in Lawrenceburgh, Indiana.

Gambling received the most newspaper space following circus day, although the *Courier* did say that the show "was much better than our people anticipated. It was one of the shows that was better than its paper."

On another page the *Courier* commented on the gambling: "There is no use to preach against the practice of people betting on other people's games. With each recurring circus the people will hand their money to the gamblers who attach themselves to the show and there is no help for it. To-day there were hundreds of

Wallace & Co's GREAT World's Menagerie!

Real Roman Hippodrome, Fine Horse
Fair and International
THREE RING CIRCUS
WILL EXHIBIT AT
COLUMBUS, MONDAY, MAY 12.



Jumping Out of a Sky Swaying Balloon!

5,000 Feet Above the Ground.

Miss Dora Montrose,

Representing the English and American Aeronautical Association, will give a BIG FREE BALLOON SHOW each day of exhibition, and jump from an Ascending Balloon at the awful altitude of 5,000 feet above the ground, clinging to a puny Parachute only to regulate her fearful fall.

50 Cages of Rare and Costly Wild Animals 50!

5 Stupendous Menageries Merged in One.

MOST FAMOUS AND BEST TRAINED ELEPHANTS
In the World.

Wallace ad in the May 1, 1890 *Columbus Advocate*. Kansas State Historical Society.

dollars thrown away on games of chance which had no chance for any person except the gambler. But the sight of the caper winning so easily every time excited them as usual and they bit and bit hard. A lot of New Salem boys engaged heartily and one old gentleman from near Floral lost about a hundred dollars in a few minutes and went to the bank to get more. He lost \$65 at one shake out of the box and persisted in spite of the protestations of

his friends in going deeper into the mire. If the same man had been asked for the loan of a dollar he would have required ample security or would have kept it, but asked no security of the blackleg. A fool and his money are strangers."

Gambling was rampant at Arkansas City on May 16 the day before the Winfield exhibitions. The *Courier* relayed a report from Arkansas City. "In trying to arrest a gambler in Arkansas City yesterday, Officer Nash was badly bruised, and it required several persons to get the fellow to court, where he paid \$60 for his fun. A gang of toughs tried to rescue the fellow."

Officer Nash came to Winfield circus day to capture the rest of the gang, as reported by the *Winfield Courier*. "Last Saturday, Officer Nash of Arkansas City, who had so much trouble with the circus gamblers on Friday, came up to renew the attack but failing to get others to do his fighting started to go home in the evening and was followed to the Santa Fe depot by about fifteen all-around circus toughs who had a rope to hang him. He took refuge in the telegraph office and telephoned for the sheriff. Then the mob dispersed and Mr. Nash went home to the bosom of his family."

Many shows countenanced gambling in Kansas and were exposed in the press, but none were as brazen as the thugs on the Wallace show. The effrontery of the bully-boys in 1890, however, was but a weak portent of the slime Ben Wallace would bring to Kansas in the season of 1891.

School was dismissed at Ellsworth on May 19, "on account of the circus."

The editor of the *Ellsworth Reporter* asked a question that appeared frequently in the press. "A couple of our thrifty farmers from the country lost a little money at the circus last Monday, of course they were mad about it. I wonder how they would have felt if they had won?"

The *Reporter* did not long dwell on the gamblers, but on May 22, published a review of what must have been a perfect circus day. The story also mentioned for the first time in Kansas the name of "Anderson."

"CIRCUS DAY, Wallace & Anderson at Ellsworth on May 19th will long be remembered in our beautiful city of Ellsworth. The Saturday previous a severe hail storm had fallen over six inches of hail had covered the ground, some of the stones being of remarkable size. On Sunday a gentle penetrating rain had fallen, but the sun of Monday rose gloriously, the day was the most charming of the year, the air clear and pure, the grass glistened fresh and green, no dust, no wind, a perfect day, just such a day as Wallace & Anderson would have made to order if it

were possible on the occasion of their circus performance. Everything on this lively May day combined to make it ever long to be remembered as a day of pleasure. Never in the history of Ellsworth have we had so enjoyable a circus, so satisfactory a show; from the hour of the street parade in the morning until the close of the evening performance, everybody was happy, nothing occurred to mar the occasion. The show itself far surpassed our expectations, it saw its own posters and went one better. We have not room to mention all the especially deserving features, but cannot refrain from saying that we hope Jolly Dan Lester will live long and gather many kernels of good corn for that 'hen and chickens,' with a good big supply for the old rooster. Miss Pauline Lee was a poem on horseback, graceful and fearless, she rode as if she were a part of the handsome horse she managed so charmingly. Mr. Bernie Wallace as the Flying Sailor was immense and attracted much attention, if our sailor boys can do as well aloft as Mr. Wallace did at Ellsworth, then the Navy is magnificently manned. Miss Lucille and Mr. Jordan in their flying trapeze act were wonderful, the leap for life of Miss Lucille is a great attraction, we hope no accident will befall the handsome little lady in this dangerous performance. Mr. Charles Ewers as the champion rider is a finished artist and we have never seen his equal in his specialties. Park Melrose in the dancing rope act proved himself to be at the head of his profession. One of the most attractive scenes was the bicycle act of the Melrose family. The menage act by Miss Jeanette Eldridge and Miss Rose Anareau. The fighting parole act by Mr. Wm. Gorman. The boy and the barrel act by Mr. Joseph Judge, and the running globe act of Miss Rosina Ouri are among the matters which deserve especial mention. The entire circus from horse to harness, from costume to actor, both cage and animals all from the tent pin to the top of the immense canvass is a wonderful combination and is worthy of the patronage of the public. We hope Wallace & Anderson will again visit Ellsworth."

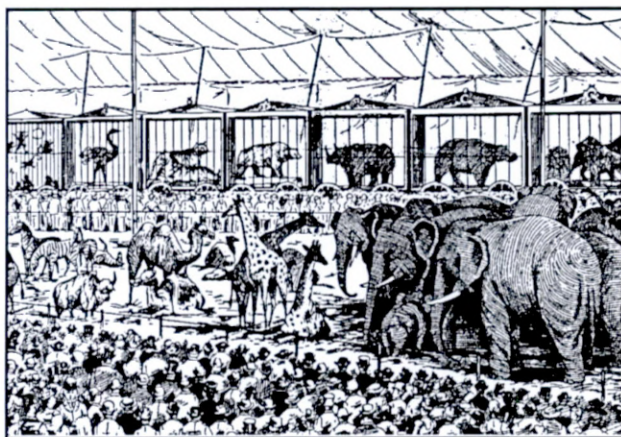
Additions to the press book by the middle of May consisted of glowing accounts of great performances in Detroit, Boston, Buffalo, Cleveland and other major cities where the show had not appeared.

The Augusta Journal, speaking of the exhibitions of May 21, stated that: "The gamblers were coining money as fast as the government mint until they were stopped." The editor advised his readers to "Bet on the Louisiana Lottery where you can know the chances are 100 to one

that you will lose but not on the shell game, where the chances are 1,000 to one against you."

The Journal was impressed by Frank Sweeney, contortionist, the "human python;" Polly Lee, equestrienne juggler; Miss Ouri, slack wire; the Melrose family, bicycles; and Park Melrose, unicycle; and Miss Theresa, "a bright, intelligent little girl of eight years who has been with her parents on the wheels for over four years."

The Hutchinson engagement of May 23, was notable for one thing. For the first time the title was given as "Wallace & Anderson's Railroad Shows."



Menagerie illustration from a Great Wallace herald. Pfening Archives.

Merchants frequently tied their advertising to the coming of the circus. In Marion, for the exhibitions of May 24, a local merchant ran the following two-column ad in the *Scimitar*: "Are you going to THE CIRCUS. If you are, buy your goods of us until show day and get a ticket free. \$10.00 cash trade gets a whole ticket. \$5.00 cash trade gets a half ticket. (Groceries Excepted.)"

"If you are not going to the circus buy of us anyhow, and we will certainly save you money. LOVELESS & SACRET."

The *Scimitar* carried a review on the 29th that was full of interesting information: "The circus. Yes, the circus came just as it was advertised and the fact of the matter is that it came a great deal larger than most people imagined it was from the manner in which it had been advertised here. But it was no larger than the crowd that was here to greet it. There must have been fully five thousand people on Main street when the parade made its appearance at ten o'clock. The street was fairly black with people from one end to the other. The parade was a magnificent affair and the general opinion was that it was the finest of its character that had ever been seen in this or any other city. THE SCIMITER reporter counted

three brass bands and a steam calliope in the procession. Also twenty-three cages and dens, a number of other vehicles of a varied nature, four elephants and five Bactrian camels. The cages and vehicles were drawn by 108 head of horses, ponies and mules, every one of them in the pink of condition, a sight alone beautiful to behold. Of the menagerie, while the collections was not as large as we have seen, it is certainly true to say that the specimens exhibited were very fine indeed and fully in keeping with the character of the entire show which was first-class in every particular. The ring performance was more than it was advertised and there was nothing said or done that could give offense to the most fastidious. Every performer was an artist in his or her line and was heartily applauded. Among the particular features were the principal bare back trick act by Miss Pauline Lee; flying sailor by Mr. Bennie Wallace; flying trapeze by Miss Lucille and Mr. Jordan; dancing rope by Mr. Park Melrose; flying rings by Miss Jordan; riding and driving four horses by Mr. Chas. Ewers; wonderful bicycle act by the Melrose family; lightening hurdle act by Mr. Wm. Gorman.

"At least 6,000 people witnessed both performances and hundreds visited the side show and remained at the concerts. The balloon ascension took place about six o'clock, later than was intended owing to the wind being too strong to render the ascension safe. The plucky aeronaut ascended several hundred feet and then dropped to earth in his parachute. It requires twenty-nine cars to carry the employees, animals and paraphernalia of this show. The only disgusting feature and one which will eventually precede and become a part of the fame of the show is the large number of confidence men and gamblers who are following it and in fact seem to be under the protection of the management. If the company hopes to meet with continued public favor it must get rid of men of such character."

The account of circus day continued under the heading of NOTES.

"The small boy was in his glory.

"Don't try to down a man at his own game. You may wish you hadn't.

"Many an admiring and envious eye gazed upon that fine array of horses.

"We do not remember to have seen a drunken man on our streets during the day.

"The people seemed to be fairly hungry for a circus, judging by the manner in which they came from far and near to attend it.

"The elephants made good advertising

agents, but fellows don't you think they came a little high considering the character and length of time of the service?"

The account of circus day in Marion closed with an intriguing mystery. The paragraph is quoted below in its entirety.

"We wonder how many took advantage of the opportunity offered to see a live gorilla, an animal seldom found in captivity, and visited the car which stood on Main and Third streets, in which they were to be seen. The gorilla is a rare curiosity and the opportunity to see one is a rare treat."

The animal was probably the property of an independent exhibitor and was no part of the Wallace show. There is no mention of a gorilla at any of the other Wallace dates in Kansas.

Any large ape in 1890, including baboons, chimpanzees, orangutans, might be called a gorilla. It is regrettable that the *Scimitar* reporter did not further investigate the matter. In all probability the beast was not a gorilla, but who can say for certain?

George H. Robinson, according to the *Osage City Free Press*, was in the city May 7, making arrangements for the exhibitions of May 31.

The date "proved to be a success," reported the *Press*. "The street parade was unusually good. The horses were superb. The arrangements for balloon ascension by this company has been reduced to science, so that the perilous descent by parachute is as free from danger as the balloon ascent, a weight attached to one side of the balloon tipping it bottom side up as soon as the aeronaut takes to the parachute, allowing the balloon to immediately 'come down.' The animal show was good and the circus performance of the highest grade."

The *Press* also reported that there "was more drunkenness in this city Saturday last than there has been seen here for several years. Whether it was the original package saloon or 'stuff' that was shipped in individually, that caused the disgraceful scenes on our streets we are not able to tell."

The "original package saloon" was another quaint attempt by Kansas to prohibit the sale of liquor by the drink. One had to buy the entire bottle. Kansas was struggling to become dry, but booze could be ordered from out of state and shipped freely to the thirsty one. Circus day—in Osage City—was frequently an opportunity for drunken revels.

Following the exhibitions of May 31 in Osage City, Wallace & Company disappeared from the Kansas press until July 24, when the *Kansas Democrat* heralded the coming of the show to Hiawatha on August 11: "As the circus spent Sunday here," the *Democrat* reported, "our reporter had a good opportunity to observe

the manner of the employees' living, etc. A circus is like a city. Some are rough impersonations of mining towns, but Wallace's is not. Everything is quiet and orderly. Profanity is not allowed among the canvas men, nor gambling among the actors. THE DEMOCRAT'S reporter took dinner at the cooking tent, Monday, the guest of Willis Cobb, press agent of the show, and a veteran in the business. For dinner we had roast beef, fried chicken, potatoes, beans, bread, coffee, butter-milk

GATES of WONDERLAND

THROWN WIDE OPEN!

The Towering Mastodon of Tented Shows, reigning by right of eminence, by right of merit, by right of superiority, and by popular will. The exalted rulers of the amusement realm.

Wallace & Anderson's

GREAT WORLDS FIFTY CAGE MENAGERIE.

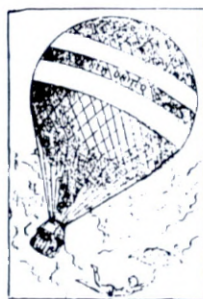
Roman Hippodrome free Horse Fair, Double Elevated Stage and International Three Ring Circus, will exhibit at

Garnett, Saturday,

AUGUST 16th.



Mammoth Balloon Ascension and Parachute jump from the Clouds.



Wallace & Anderson ad in the August 1, 1890 *Garnett Eagle*. Kansas State Historical Society.

and watermelons. Pretty good dinner for stake-pullers, canvas employees and newspaper men, wasn't it? These men employed about the tent get from \$27 to \$45 per month and board. Bosses and managers of departments get from \$50 to \$60 per month and board. Actors, riders and side-show freaks yet from \$50 to \$150 per week and all expenses. These wages, of course, mean with Wallace's show. Other circuses do not pay so well as a rule. Wallace has 260 men with him. He has 200 horses which cost him not less than \$125 each. His horses won the admiration of

all. Few, however, as they examined the stock, realized that it alone represented a comfortable fortune. Another fortune is tied up in railroad cars, and another in the animals and their cages. The price of a fine residence is represented in the tents and canvas; the money spent in buying the common wagons would build a respectable wagon factory, and so on through the list—everything represents money, and lots of it. No wonder the management feels like swearing when the weather is bad or the attendance small.

"The entire DEMOCRAT force was under obligations during the day to Willis Cobb, the press agent, who took especial pains to make things pleasant for all whom he met."

Gambling was "the only bad feature of Monday's circus," the *Democrat* complained. "It is estimated that the shell man got away with some \$1,400 to \$1,500."

"Following the circus came the customary thug with his jimmy and sand bag. Monday night Hiawatha was full of them. They seem to go just behind the circus, as the town was full of toughs Tuesday morning. Not less than a dozen slept in the Wellcome & Blair lumber yards and were routed out when the men went to work. These men do not belong to the show, they follow it for what 'pickings' they can yet. And although they plied their trade vigorously in Hiawatha, we are pleased to state that they did not secure much."

"At Mr. Remayan's home an entrance was attempted. A shot from a 'forty-four' frightened the marauders away."

"John Morris' coal office was entered, the desks rifled and the safe opened. Nothing of value was obtained, but the keys to the yards and office were taken."

"The office of Salisbury & Graham was rifled and Jere Graham's overcoat taken."

"Mr. Kessler's house, just west of the city, was entered. A suit of clothes, \$30 in money, and several other things were taken."

"Ed Hoyer lost a case of spring chickens."

"An attempt was made to sand-bag a man Monday night on Utah street, near the Armory. But it was unsuccessful. The man refused to give his name."

"Henry Schmidt, who lives near the fair ground, had \$15 picked from his pocket."

"A man named Pheister is reported to have had \$200 picked from his pocket."

Circus day drunks presented a problem in Hiawatha, according to the *Headlight* of nearby Horton.

"Last Monday a young man from Robinson went to Hiawatha to attend the circus. While there an Indian wanted him to go and purchase some liquor for him which he did and sold to the Indian. He made such a good profit on the stuff that

he laid in a supply and soon had all the Indians 'heap much drunk.' He was arrested on the charge of selling whiskey to the Indians. After he was arrested it was ascertained he would make some sensational disclosures as to where he bought the liquor so the charge of plain drunk was entered against him and he was fined \$9.00 and told to go in peace. Yet they do say it is impossible to buy any liquor in Hiawatha."

Willis Cobb received compliments wherever the show played and it was not all due to the fact that he was the man who paid the advertising bill.

"THE DEMOCRAT is pleased to recommend Willis Cobb, Wallace & Co's. press manager to all the newspaper boys with whom it may be his fortune to have acquaintance. He will take care of you and do it in a manner that is most pleasing. He has none of the officiousness of 'this is ours' about him, but he never forgets when a courtesy can be extended, and it is done too, because it is the nature of the man to do so. Don't forget Cobb, boys, he won't forget you."

Wallace & Anderson played Ft. Scott on August 13. The Ft. Scott *Weekly Monitor* reported that, "An immense throng of people gathered at the depot yesterday morning to view the arrival of Wallace & Co's circus. They were expected at 6 o'clock, but did not arrive until after 10. The crowd was a patient one, however, and stood it out, determined to see the show and the parade. The streets of the city were crowded with people, and the day was a veritable circus one."

During the parade, according to the *Monitor*, it was proven once again that country horses and circus elephants do not mix.

"A farmer named Woodman, had a team that took fright at the elephants and began backing out of the way. While so doing, a little girl was caught between the wheels of the wagon and a buggy. The little girl was in charge of a child who received a slight scratch on the neck. By-standers rushed in and fortunately rescued both children from a perilous situation."

It would be interesting to know how an elephant looks to a horse.

"Wallace & Co's circus attracted a tremendous crowd last Thursday [August 14]. And it was a good show, probably the best that Iola ever saw. The street parade was fine and was witnessed by hundreds who came to town specially to see

it. The menagerie was not large, but was unusually well selected, containing animals that are rarely seen except in the very largest shows. Two rings and a platform were used during the performance in the circus, and some wonderful feats were shown. The failure to inflate the balloon and the consequent omission of the parachute act was a great disappointment, and the excuse of the management that the failure was due to the wind was received with some thing like jeers by the crowd which had stood in the sun for two hours without having observed that the wind was blowing. But in the main everybody was satisfied, and if



Illustration from a Great Wallace herald. Pfening Archives.

the Wallace show ever comes this way again, everybody will go to see it."

A wild man in Missouri was the subject of a handout printed in the *Garnett Journal* on August 1, and was not used again in Kansas: "People living north of Alexandria, Missouri have been badly frightened recently by the appearance of a wild man. A report came from Keokuk to the effect that the man has also been seen on several occasions on the outskirts of that city, on which occasions he badly frightened women and children. He is described as being old in appearance, with a shaggy beard and a ferocious cast of countenance. His long, matted white hair streams from the palsied head, while his eyes roll wildly, wither with fever or delirium. The creature appears in almost a naked condition, carrying only a small red blanket, which he used as a couch. His chief delight is to lie down near the railroad track, remain there a short time, and then jump up wildly, and soon repeat the operation. He has occasionally begged for food at farm houses, but his condition has always alarmed women and he has been driven away. All efforts to capture

the strange man have proven unavailing.-Pittsfield Herald, June 14, 1890.

"The Wild Man above described has been captured and is on exhibition in the annex connected with Wallace & Anderson' 12 Allied Shows which will be in Garnett on August 16th."

The history of Kansas is loaded with wild men from Missouri. Why buy a ticket?

"The circus has come and gone," the *Journal* reported. "The wind and rain in the evening prevented any show, and as the managers announced that here would be none, a great many dollars were refunded on tickets. As the rain was more beneficial to the community than the performance we have no tears to shed on account of having several unused 'comps' in stock."

The *Garnett Eagle* was of the opinion that "the show managers did the handsome thing" when they refunded the money spent on the evening performance.

Another evening performance was lost at Council Grove on August 18, due to the inability of the Missouri Pacific to move the show to Topeka in time for two exhibitions on the 19th. Even so the day was a success as the *Council Grove Guard* reported: "Wallace & Anderson's Show.

Last Monday the above-named show pitched its tents in our city and gave an entertainment in the afternoon--an entertainment that was witnessed by over 3,500 people. With this show there are over one hundred and fifty finely bred horses, including fifteen of the prettiest Shetland ponies ever seen anywhere. The performance, from beginning to end--bareback riding, trapeze performing, rope walking, etc.--was first-class, while the collection of animals was large and represented the animal and bird kingdom of almost every country on the globe. Because of not being able to make proper railroad connections they were prevented from showing in the evening, which disappointed many who came from a distance to attend at night. In conclusion--we have never had dealings with a more honorable and courteous lot of show people, and to Mr. Willis Cobb, the press manager of this combination, are we indebted for every courtesy that it was in his power to extend. We hope to be able to meet all of these people in our city again before another republican is elected to succeed President Harrison."

In spite of an early departure from Council Grove the plans of Wallace & Company were hampered by the mis-

fortunes of the Missouri Pacific. The Topeka *State Journal*, an evening paper, reported on circus day, August 19, that, "Wallace & Co.'s circus arrived in Topeka this forenoon from Council Grove. They did not give a performance there last night, in order to reach Topeka, but a Missouri Pacific engine on one of their trains broke down and it was late when they arrived in Topeka and it was after one o'clock when their parade appeared on the streets, but the people who waited on the streets all forenoon during the rain, were well repaid, for a cleaner circus parade has not been given in Topeka. The equipment of the entire circus is first class and the menagerie is a fine collection of animals and curiosities. The afternoon performance did not begin until 3 o'clock, but the tents were well filled, and will no doubt be crowded to-night."

The *Journal* expressed the opinion that, "The attendance at the show to-day did not indicate hard times."

The great sport of escaping the license fee entirely, or at least reducing the amount, was played in Topeka by George H. Robinson, agent of the Wallace show. "They have a show about half the size of Forepaugh's, Barnum's, Sells Brothers and others of national reputation," according to the *Kansas Democrat* of July 29. Robinson asked that the show be allowed to exhibit for half the sum usually charged, \$75. "On motion of Councilman Gunn the request was granted."

On circus day the *Democrat* noted the presence of James Anderson who was "one of the proprietors of the show, was one of Topeka's pioneers, and at one time occupied a seat in the city council. He has been kept busy today shaking hands with old friends, and renewing the acquaintances of former days."

During the Topeka engagement the gamblers and thugs took the day off.

The Topeka *Daily Capital* stated that: "The show is under the management of James T. Anderson, formerly a member of the Topeka city council and it is pleasant to know that morality is strictly enforced among the employees."

The *Democrat* claimed that the show "has none of the elements of rowdiness connected with it. The severest discipline is maintained among all attaches of the show and perfect order is maintained. No fakirs are permitted to hang upon its skirts and fatten from its patrons, and this fact has given the people confidence in it wherever it has been."

The press in Topeka should have asked the people of Winfield, Arkansas City and a dozen other Kansas towns about the morality and discipline of the Wallace aggregation.

Much of the success of the Wallace show was due to Willis Cobb who did a

superb job of getting good reviews from the Kansas press. Cobb was well known in Topeka through his association with the Sells brothers when they wintered their shows in the city.

The *Journal* considered Cobb to be "one of the pleasantest men in the profession."

The *Democrat* commented on "his open, social nature [which] makes him a prime favorite with the newspaper men, who he is constantly exerting himself to entertain."

The value of Cobb to the Wallace organization was well-stated by the Junction City *Republican* of August 22: "It is a good, clean, perfect show, run by as gentlemanly a set of good fellows as ever lived. But, pshaw, you couldn't expect anything else when you learn that Willis Cobb, the old-timer, is the press agent. That fact of itself is sufficient to brand Wallace & Co.'s circus as a legitimate enterprise, owned and operated by gentlemen."

Willis Cobb covered a multitude of sins. Part of his charm was in the little bag he carried about as he paid the advertising bills.

Advertising for the Topeka engagement began July 31, when the first advertising car came in on the Missouri Pacific. The first newspaper ad appeared in the *Journal* of August 1 and was repeated 15 times. The *Democrat* carried seven advertisements.

W. W. Parmelee, contracting agent, checked in to Allen Sells' Chesterfield hotel on Sunday, August 3. The crew of the second advance car, consisting of W. S. Dunnington, Fred Dennis, Harry Dennis, John Maloney, M. Silver, Tom Kelly and Ed Mikesell were guests at the Chesterfield August 12.

All of the Topeka papers spoke of the excellent parade, the beautiful horses, the excellent performance and the large crowds. All of the papers mentioned the balloon ascension following the matinee.

"After the performance in the afternoon occurred the balloon ascension," according to the *Capital*. "Just as the balloon started, by some accident the parachute became detached, and the aeronaut went up and came down with the balloon, swinging upon the trapeze bar. The balloon descended west of Washburn college, and in its descent struck the porch of a house upon which the owner was stand-

ing. He seized the balloon, and together with the aeronaut, held it securely, landing it in a vacant lot close by, without injury to man or canvas."

When circus day was all over and done, the *Journal* wondered, "How many cities of 30,000 are there in the United States that can take care of a circus and not have a single arrest?"

Circus day in Manhattan on August 20 was satisfactory to all except Prof. Georgeson. The *Mercury* related that, "Prof. Georgeson's horse became frightened at the elephants in the procession this morning. He jumped and fell and soon died. It is supposed that he burst a blood vessel."

Advertising car No. 1, in charge of Col. Geo. Knott, was in Junction City on August 2 and again on August 5. Newspaper advertising began on August 7. A condescending handout aimed at women appeared on the 7th in the Junction City *Tribune*: "Go In Day Time."

"The afternoon performances are always best for ladies, children and aged people to attend, for a variety of reasons. In the larger towns they are always less crowded, the wild animals are more lively because they are not fed until the

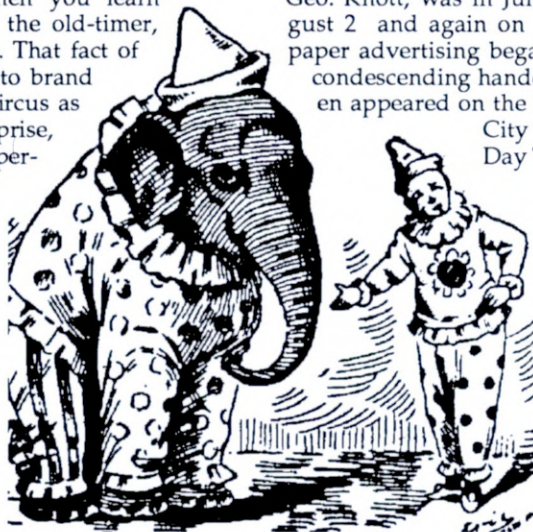
close of the afternoon show, and the horses and performers, acrobats, gymnasts, riders and specialists are fresher and more active, perhaps, having just had a refreshing night's rest since the last exhibition the evening previous; besides it is in daylight and the little ones after supper and an hour's prattle about what they have seen, go to bed to dream of the glories of a show the like of which they may never behold again. Remember Wallace & Anderson's date is Thursday, Aug. 21.

"There are a number of itinerant shows that can exhibit all their acts and more too in one ring. Wallace & Anderson have three rings."

The Junction City *Union* considered August 21, to be a perfect circus day. It was evidently a good day for the gamblers, also, as reported in the *Union*.

"A poor unfortunate 'speculator' came whimpering up to one of the county officials after the show was out, and to all appearances felt exceedingly sad. He lost \$60 on a little game that looked just like a 'sure thing' but it wasn't."

The Concordia *Empire*, speaking of the exhibitions of August 22, reported that,



"Wallace & Anderson's circus and menagerie had a beautiful day for their exhibition last Friday. In spite of the hard times there was a large attendance and everybody seemed highly pleased. The animals in the menagerie were a fine lot. There was an excellent variety and they were all sleek and fat. In the performance of difficult and wonderful feats the circus was the best that had been here for years, but the special feature of the show was the large number of fine and well trained horses. On account of the high wind that prevailed all afternoon and evening the balloon ascension could not be made.

The show bears the marks of prosperity. All the trappings were the very richest, and possibly the gentlemanly and courteous bearing of the managers and employees contributes no little to its success."

The Concordia Times was able to shed some additional light on the prosperity of Wallace & Company: "It is a true saying, and was abundantly verified last Friday, that here is no fool like old ones. We are informed that an old gentleman out here got scooped to the melody of \$65 at a gambling affair, another farmer here was lightened to the accents of \$30, another old saint \$2, a father and son \$5 each, and another individual who went around last year and begged like a rough shod sinner for grain and truck, now sighs to the tune of \$7 gone on the little trick. Will some one send out a call to the heathen nations for money and missionaries to come among us and go to work. These are a few among us who went to see the elephant's tracks in the streets, and if the gambling affair drew from other vicinities as from this one, they made a good haul. We suppose the 'tare off' contraction of money and Republican administration will catch thunder from them for their hard run condition. Oh yes. Eutopia."

The Marysville Daily Free Press did its duty by warning its readers that, "the big show will arrive in Marysville early Sunday morning, and will remain here until Monday night. During that time, our citizens should be on their guard, against sneak thieves and pickpockets. There is not a circus on the road but what is followed up by these gentry, and a little carelessness may result in serious loss and inconvenience."

Despite the fears of the editor, he gave the show good coverage, beginning on August 18, when the Press reported that, "Four teams were sent out from the Blue Valley stable this morning to distribute circus literature."

On the 22d the Press reported that, "Wallace & Co's circus have ordered 250 lbs of meat and 200 loaves of bread for

breakfast Sunday morning. Must be they have large appetites, as 40 or 45 will stay at the hotel."

On circus day, August 25, the was bubbling with news.

"Nearly all of Oketo came down to see the circus.

"Not the least of the attractions of Wallace & Co's circus is the music. Under the efficient leadership of Prof. Wm. Goetz, that band has attained almost world wide renown.

"The street parade by the Wallace & Co., circus today was the finest display



presented in that line to the people of Marysville for years. It was great and gives evidence of the concern being first class, and the performances at the tents this afternoon verified the expectation. Wallace & Co. 's circus is one of the best on the road this season."

After the show had come and gone, the Press still had circus news: "A boy about twelve years old fainted at the circus yesterday. It was a long time before he recovered. We could not learn his name.

"Only one man appeared in police court this morning to answer for the sins of circus day. He paid a fine of \$3.00 and costs for disturbing the peace.

"Yesterday during the street parade, sneak thieves went through Wm. Hardin's residence. Nearly the whole house was ransacked, but it is believed they found no money. At least nothing was missing.

"Sheriff Mead, of Clay County, came up yesterday for the purpose of arresting two followers of the circus for deviltry done at Clay Center. He found only one of the men he wanted, and left on the noon train for home. The man arrested is accused of robbery.

"A heavy rain fell here yesterday after-

noon commencing at two o'clock and lasting until after dark. The roads leading into the city are quite muddy today.

"Owing to the rain a large number of people who came in to see the circus had to remain over night."

The Marysville Marshall County Democrat claimed that, "Owing to the storm but few people attended the circus last evening."

Wallace & Company presented a laudable performance wherever the show appeared. Different editors had different favorites but there was one outstanding feature that excelled all others--the

horses. A sampling of opinion is noted below: "The stock and animals, especially the horses were the finest that have ever been seen in Columbus." Columbus Advocate, May 15.

"The horses, nearly 200 in number were very fine." Winfield Courier, May 19.

"Their street parade was above the average, the display of fine blooded horses being especially noticeable." Newton Weekly Journal, May 23.

"The most beautiful outfit of horses are carried with this show of any that has visited our city." Hutchinson Clipper, May 26.

"Many an admiring and envious eye gazed upon that fine array of horses." Marion Scimitar, May 29.

"He has 200 horses which cost him not less than \$125 each. His horses won the admiration of all." Hiawatha Kansas Democrat, August 14.

"Wallace & Anderson have the finest string of horses that have ever been seen with a show in Topeka." Topeka State Journal, August 19.

"We never saw as fine a lot of horses together before." Manhattan Mercury, August 20.

"Wallace & Co's circus has the finest lot of horses that were ever in our city." Marysville Daily Free Press, August 25.

The name of Anderson during the two campaigns in Kansas is missing from 16 of the dates. Ten towns were advertised as Wallace & Anderson. With one exception (Hiawatha) all of the August dates are Wallace & Anderson. Why the name of Anderson was omitted early in the season is unknown. There was one town, Hutchinson, May 3, that recorded both names in a small advertisement nearly three weeks ahead of the exhibitions of May 23.

The last word on Wallace & Company in Kansas in 1890, was one sentence in the Marysville Daily Free Press on August 27: "Wallace & Co's circus passed through the city en route from Fairbury [NE] to Beatrice [NE]."

Research funded in part by grants from Wolfe's Camera & Video, Topeka, Kansas.

Mike Martin's CIRCUS HOBBY HALL

WE MOVED!

OUR NEW
ADDRESS IS
16840 S.W. 62 ST.
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33331

1. R/B COLLECTOR PACKAGE

Contains one each of the following scarce items:

- 1953 Press Pass Card
- 1954 Season Pass Card (Very Ornate)
- 1955 Reserved Seat Ticket
- 1968 Employee Pass Card
- 1960 Merle Evans' RBB&B Business Card

ALL MINT ITEMS PER. PKG. \$5.50

2. R/B 100TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION PROGRAM

1970 - Loaded with photos and show history galore, this colorful program traces the shows 1ST 100 YEARS! MINT COPIES, IN VERY SHORT SUPPLY, TWO GORGEOUS POSTERS ARE INCLUDED. THESE WILL GO FAST!
EACH \$12.50

3. CIRCUS VARGAS PROGRAM PACKAGE

5 photo-filled editions from the show's days as a mammoth 3 ringer! Package includes 1989, 1984, 1983, 1978 Plus the JUMBO SIZE, 1980 EDITION. MINT, LIMITED SUPPLY! PER SET \$16.00

4. CIRCUS CELEBRITY PHOTOS - 8X10 B&W

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| A. PINITO DEL ORO | G. JOHN R. NORTH |
| B. DOROTHY HERBERT | H. CLYDE BEATTY |
| C. ERNESTINE CLARK | I. FELIX ADLER |
| D. DOLLY JACOBS | J. OTTO GREIBLING |
| E. TREVOR BALE | K. PAUL JUNG |
| F. DAMOO DHOTRE | L. LOU JACOBS |

\$2.50 EA/4 FOR \$8.00

5. RINGING MUSEUM OF THE CIRCUS 1963

Mel Miller's 6" x 9" booklet details the rich history of the circus. Profusely illustrated with rare photos.
LIMITED SUPPLY EACH \$7.00

6. HUNT BROTHERS 3 RING CIRCUS

A pocket-sized, photo-filled booklet covering their performers, wild west show and more. Plus details on the 'New for '37' air conditioned big top.
UNUSUAL ITEM! EACH \$6.00

7. LETTERHEADS: FULL COLOR 8 1/2 X 11

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| A. GGW FAREWELL TOUR | D. BARTOK CIRCUS |
| B. RINGLING/BARNUM | E. R/B MONTE CARLO |
| C. HOXIE-BARDEX | F. ROBBINS BROS. |
- \$2.00 EA/6 FOR \$10.00

8. BUFFALO & PAWNEE BILL KEY CHAINS

Here's an unusual item! An exacting copy of an early 1900's watch fob medallion. Shows detailed likenesses of the two Bills in bronze-like metal. Nice nostalgic piece and practical too.
EACH \$7.50

9. R/B ONE SHEET POSTERS

- | | |
|---------------------|----------|
| A. SNARLING TIGER | \$ 10.00 |
| B. GUNTHER FAREWELL | \$ 15.00 |
| C. R/B MONTE CARLO | \$ 15.00 |

ORDERING INFORMATION: Minimum order is \$5.00. Shipping charges are extra. Please add \$2.50 or a minimum of 10% of the total order (whichever is larger) for postage. Foreign orders include \$8.00 or 20% of the total order (whichever is larger). All orders must be paid in US FUNDS. Please allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

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Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33331
Fla. residents add
6% Sales tax

CIRCUS LIFE AND ADVENTURE OF ADAM BARDY

Every so often, story books are written that tell of someone who has lived an interesting and adventurous life, and there are times that some local person may come along who has experienced such an adventure in his life's journey. Of local interest is the story of Adam Bardy, who began his "adventure" in 1915, at the age of 8, running away with the great Buffalo Bill Wild West Circus, when the Circus was playing in his home town of Webster, Mass.

This beginning adventure was of very short duration, as Adam met up with gypsy fortune tellers the very next day, and, in their generosity, they gave Adam trolley car fare money, and Adam returned home.

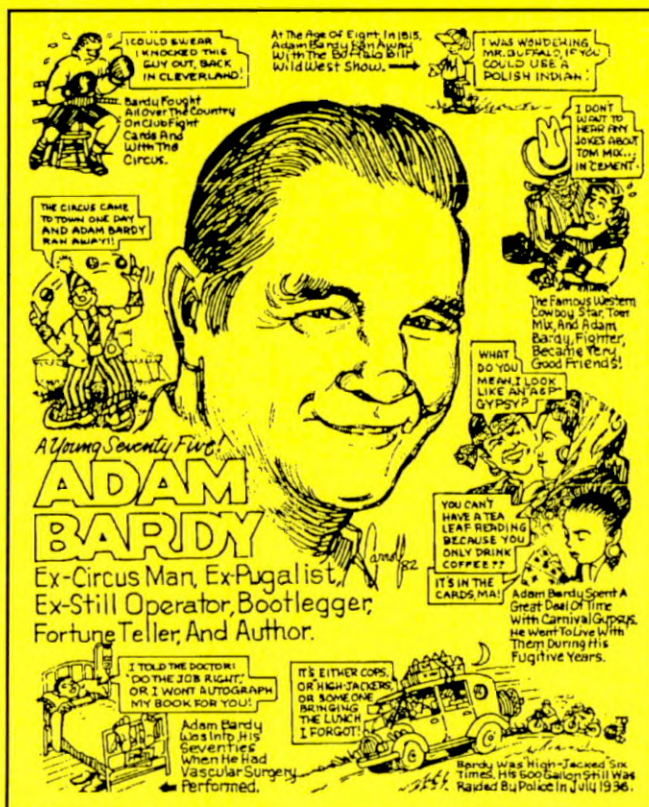
In Adam's teenage years, he lived with woodchoppers in shanties in the woods, and finally in a deserted farmhouse. At the age of 17, Adam joined the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus. Other large and small circuses were to be Adam's life, until, in 1929, Adam met up with Kentucky Mountaineers, and the life of a bootlegger was to begin. A thrilling adventure as a big-time bootlegger was Adam's lot in life, until the Conn. State Police wiped out the operation. Adam escaped from custody, and a fugitive's existence lasting 7 long years began. During this time, Adam learned all about fortune telling, a life he followed for many years. After that 7 years, Adam gave up and turned himself in to the police. He went on to raising beautiful meat and show rabbits, and became New England's largest rabbit breeder. Then he went back to doing character readings, using palm readings and handwriting analysis by mail.

But, of all Adam's adventures, his memories of circus life were the best, including the opportunity to have had personal friends like the great Tom Mix, who joined the Sells Floto Circus when Adam was with that circus in 1929, and Adam's interest in boxing, which his good friend Tom Mix really loved.

And now, as Adam lives his quiet life out in the country, he has written an interesting book that tells of his 47 years with his wonderful late wife, Ann, who was a devoted and loving mate. The story tells of what it was like to live with a fugitive and bootlegger husband all those years, and then of her passing in 1980. Adam recounts his loneliness for 3 years. Adam continues his story by telling how the palmistry reading of a young 21 year old girl blossomed into a wonderful friendship of true love and romance, as it can come to one who has lived an adventurous, interesting life. The story explains how, through deep faith in God, Adam could live this strange, unusual and interesting life, so full of excitement, and still remain the happy-go-lucky person he still is. Adam credits all this to the guiding hand of God.

The interesting life story of Adam includes that of his close companion, 22-year-old Terry Lyn Bates. Her story alone is well worth the price of the book, as one can see that age alone is not what counts, but the way we live our lives.

The book includes many pictures that tell the life story of Adam. For an autographed copy of "Circus Life and Adventure of Adam Bardy," send check or money order for \$12.95 to:



ADAM BARDY

87 Alm Rd.
Thompson, CT 06277